"THIS IS YOUR STRIKE" ISSUE

NEW MASSES

February 5, 1946 15¢ In Canada 20¢

Pittsburgh
RICHARD O. BOYER

Bethlehem
MILLEN BRAND

Chicago
HOWARD FAST

ARTISTS ON THE PICKETLINE

KLEINHOLZ EVERGOOD GROSS
PICKENS HIRSCH BECKER

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

You'll find them in every office. They have imagination, initiative, nervous energy. They make you ashamed of yourself, if you have remnants of these qualities from ten to six and lose them in the hours following. This same "they" act first, reminding you that a card or telegram to your Congressman is the logical follow-up on the morning's headlines, sticking doggedly beside your typewriter until you say "Okay, what now?" and discover it's something you should have thought of yourself hours ago.

"They" in NEW MASSES' language is its circulation department. It happens in this case to be strictly on the distaff side. There are: (1) Carmela Weinstein, manager, poised, gentle, and strictly efficient; (2) Sarah Schlossberg, the girl who brushes our nose with fountain pen ink until we tell our lawmakers; (3) Carrie Perry, quiet, no fuss, but eye dead set on the objective; (4) Evelyn Weiner, who never says much but turns out an amount of work you'd never believe.

Wonder why this introduction? These served as waker-uppers to every ber of this staff. Not only do te beautifully as a department g themselves, but their activities are something to stand back and peer at. One of the best appeal letters you've ever received was done by them (if you remember, it was signed by Sarah Schlossberg—she insists it was the collective work of the entire group). We could enumerate hundreds of other past examples—it would be more pertinent to stick to later developments.

Before Christmas, "circulation" thought of the kids in France whose fathers and maybe mothers had been killed in the past years. They sent clothing, food, everything they could get hold of that any child might need. The response was warm—a letter of thanks and appreciation from the Communist Party of France which enclosed an announcement from *L'Humanite* of the occasion on which the gifts were to be presented. Marcel Cachin was slated as main speaker. But our stimulus gals will never be satisfied, it appears. They want to adopt four French war orphans as soon as posible.

SPEAKING of foreign shores, it's "hello" this week to the *Modern Quarterly*, English counterpart to *Science and Society*. Its editor is Dr. John Lewis; its contributors such old friends as J. B. S. Haldane, Norman Mackenzie, A. L. Lloyd and Francis Klingender. And "from the United States," they announce, "we shall be publishing articles on Arthur Koestler, by Joel Bradford of NEW MASSES." London publishing address is 40 Claremont Park, Finchley, London, N.3.

TRANSLATED into English, the title of a new Soviet publication recently seen in this country is *World Economics and World Politics*. Number Nine, same publication, reprints an article from a forthcoming work by Eugene Varga, prominent Soviet economist who appeared in NM last week. In *World Economics* Mr. Varga, proving the limitations of planning under capitalism, quotes a number of authorities, among them A. B. Magil, from whose articles on the automobile industry—printed in this magazine in April 1943—he uses a number of extracts.

WHO'S WHO: Richard O. Boyer is one of NM's regular columnists, and is on the staff of the *New Yorker*. . . . Millen Brand is the author of two novels, *The Outward Room* and *The Heroes*, and appears in the latest edition of *Cross Section*, edited by Edwin Seaver. Brand's new novel, *Albert Sears*, will be published by Simon and Schuster this fall. . . . Howard Fast's latest novel is *Freedom Road*. Prof. A. D. Winspear is director of the Abraham Lincoln School in Chicago.

IT WILL be a long time before we look forward to reading a newspaper as eagerly as we pick up the *Daily Worker* these days. What a star lot of correspondents they signed up to cover the current strike scene! Out-of-town papers please copy: who else in the metropolitan daily field even tried to present that kind of widespread and talented reportage? Orchids are too expensive, *Daily*, but we'll buy you several contributions to the GM strike fund.

NEXT week look for a piece by Albert Maltz on "Left-wing Aesthetics and Practice." Isidor Schneider will comment on the article and on the subject generally, and together their pieces are sure to provide a basis for lots of thought and argument. M. DE A.

NEW MASSES
ESTABLISHED 1911

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Two weeks' notice is requested for change of address. Notification sent to NEW MASSES rather than the Po Office will give the best results. Vol. LVIII, No. 6. Published by THE NEW MASSES INC., 104 Ea Ninth Street, New York 3, N. Y. Copyright 1945. THE NEW MASSES, INC. Reg. U. S. Patent Offic Washington Office, 954 National Press Bldg. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permissio Entered as second-class matter, June 23, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act March 3, 1879. Single copies 15 cents. Subscriptions $5.00 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico; si months $2.75; three months $1.50. Foreign, $6.00 a year; six months $3.25; three months, $1.75. Canada $6.00 a year, $3.50 for six months, U. S. money; single copies in Canada 20c Canadian mon NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers and artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompa by stamped, addressed envelope.

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NEW MASSES
VOL. LVIII FEBRUARY 5, 1946 NO. 6

"IF THEY COULD SEE US NOW"

How Today's Strikes Differ From Yesterday's. Enemies Into Friends . . .

By RICHARD O. BOYER

Homestead, Pa.

SOMETIMES at dusk, when the red and blue neon signs on the noisy main street here begin to wink in the cold twilight, a group of pickets stops for a moment before a bleak monument to nameless men. "If they could only see us now," they say and glance at the epitaph to "the iron and steel workers who were killed in Homestead, Pa. on July 6, 1892 while striking against the Carnegie Steel Company in defense of their American rights." The monument, which was erected by the local steel union in 1941, contains no names, for in 1892 the names of dead workers were not saved for posterity. Neither does it proclaim the number of slain, for the authorities were never sure whether it was five or six, but as the steel workers hurry away to join the mass picket line at the Amity gate of the Carnegie-Illinois plant something of the nameless dead goes marching with them.

To some this may be a figure of speech but to the pickets it is a good deal more than that. The past lives again in a strike, especially in this one where the strike movement, the country over, has ascended to a level sufficiently unprecedented to make history. As the pickets here revolve in zero cold about iron drums whose flames lick upward in the night, they speak at length of '92 and 1919. "If those guys could see us now," they say. "If they could see our setup now." A war veteran in an emerald green sweater with the word "Shamrock" in white across his chest says, "My granddad was shot in the back in 1892. My dad was shot in the 1919 strike. It's in the Bible at home. And I'm in this strike." It is after midnight and it is beginning to snow. Now and again the pickets break their line and stretch their hands towards the fire. Up above them looms the huge shadow of the High Level Bridge, dim lights outlining its length stretching across the Monongahela at about the point where their grandfathers fought the Pinkerton's on that hot July day. The *Little Bill,* a stern wheeler towing barges, brought the armed Pinkerton thugs toward shore. "We stole a cannon," the veteran with the shamrock says, "and we filled it with scrap iron and let them have it." The Baltimore and Ohio flanks the plant, which is three and one-half miles in length, and now from far away a whistle sounds shrill and lonesome in the night. It is a freight train, and while it lumbers by conversation is

Chaim Gross

Swords into Ploughshares?

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drowned in the metallic clackety roar. A few moments later, on another track, a modern streamlined electric passenger train shakes by, its horn giving out deep, quick, harsh blasts, like those of a tug, and one can see the falling snowflakes, lazy and deliberate, in the brilliance of its searchlight.

There is a momentary silence when the train has passed until a picket speaks of Fannie Sellins, the union organizer who was killed on August 26 in the 1919 steel strike. "They wouldn't even let you talk then," he says. "They wouldn't have let Jesus Christ speak." They speak of the wholesale shootings, sluggings and arrests that occurred in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois in the 1919 steel strike and someone is almost sure to mention Bill Foster, now head of the Communist Party, who led the strike. "I wish the old timers could see our setup now," someone says again as the line once more begins to revolve around the flaming drum before the Amity gate. No police are visible. There is no khaki-clad militia with bayonets. Thus far there are no scabs. The huge mill, the second largest in the world, where 12,000 once worked and filled the night with flame and clamor, is as quiet as a mausoleum. Elmer Kish, in charge of picketing, says somberly, "This whole strike movement is different from anything before. It's something new."

THE present national strike movement *is* something new, but to judge it properly current developments must be placed against the backdrop of the past ten years. In less than ten years organized labor has increased from 3,000,000 to 14,000,000 members, entered national politics for the first time, and played its important part in electing a President. Some 40,000,000 people, including the families of union members, are now influenced by labor's policies. In the long view of history this ten-year growth, effecting an almost qualitative change in the nation's composition, may be compared with such events as the opening of the West and the passing of the frontier. The decade began, if one may stipulate an arbitrary date, on a snowy February morning in 1936 in Akron, Ohio, when rubber workers began that first big sitdown whose ultimate effects have changed the face of the nation. The sitdown spread to Detroit, where it enveloped the plants of General Motors, streaked to Chicago, sped to the West Coast, and when it was all over the CIO had organized the mass industries. The change that followed in the wake of the CIO was more than economic. It changed habits of thought. The old American maxims of "Save your money," "Keep your shoes shined" and "Get to work on time" began to be replaced by others less individualistic, such as "Never cross a picket line" and "In unity there is strength." A threatening dichotomy appeared in

Alton Pickens

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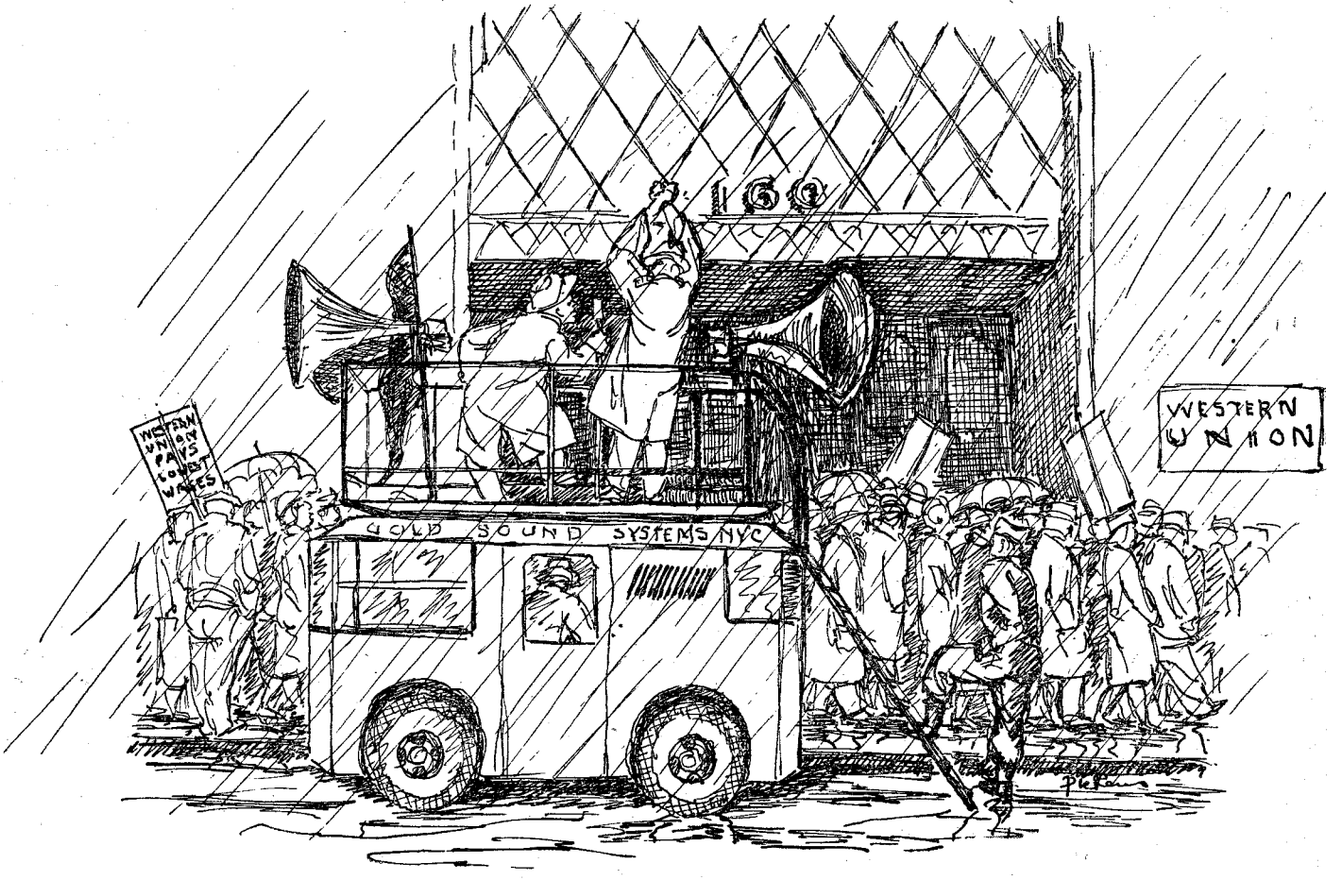
American life, with much of the middle class regarding strikes as lawless violence while millions of other Americans viewed them as economic Lexingtons.

At the moment that dichotomy is in the process of being at least partly resolved, with sizable segments of the middle class backing labor. One reason is that since the war, when housewives, clerks, girls, high school graduates and retired businessmen entered its ranks, organized labor has contained in itself many of the middle class. There are many other important differences between the present strikes and their predecessors. Whereas in 1919 returned veterans broke the nationwide strike wave following the First World World, today's veterans are often on the picket line, while many not there are staunchly opposing industry's effort to pit them against the picket lines in back-to-work movements. I met within the past fortnight more than one man in western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio who in 1919, and in some instances in the 1937 strikes, was a vigilante with a pick-handle in his hand and who now is organizing merchants' committees to support the present strikers. In 1919, and again in the organizing sitdowns of '36 and '37, parts of the Negro people were exploited by industry as an aid in strikebreaking. Today the Negro people, active on the picket line, are solidly behind labor, and collections being taken for labor in churches and fraternal orders that in the past have not been friendly to it. Entire communities, heretofore hostile as a whole to labor, are now backing the current strikes. There are thousands of people on the picket lines who never before have been in a strike. In Sharon and Farrell on the Pennsylvania-Ohio line I met many strikers who a decade ago had been bitterly against the CIO. In these towns, which are adjacent, more than one hundred small merchants had contributed $6,000 in a single week, despite a warning by the Chamber of Commerce that those who so contributed would be liable to a hundred-dollar fine.

POLITICIANS, some of whom have been inveterate labor-baiters, are giving their support, city administrations which in the past have crippled picketing are now permitting mass demonstrations, and police who once cracked heads are now, at least in some instances, jovially leading trade union parades and tolerantly watching picket lines from a reassuring distance. Police headed a union parade in Bloomfield, N. J. and when asked why said they were returning the favor of the striking CIO electrical workers there who had aided them in a successful wage drive. In Bloomfield, moreover, barbers are giving free haircuts, four restaurants are giving free meals, and eighty percent of the city is said to be behind the strikers. In Pittsburgh, perhaps the capital of bitter anti-labor sentiment, Thomas Kilgallen, president of the City Council, met with strikers in a mass meeting and promised his support. In McKeesport, where union men were arrested for attempting to speak in 1919, joint action of the United Electrical Workers and the Steel Workers locals forced the Democratic county machine to nominate progressive Frank Buchanan as Democratic candidate for Congress from the Thirty-third Pennsylvania district. In Duquesne, where anti-labor violence flared in the last steel strike and where the streets were unsafe for a union man, Republican Mayor Frank Kopriver, said to striking steel workers, "I'll show you one Republican that is going down the line for this strike. I'm going to help you win it." At Clairton, where steel workers starved in 1919, the city government has voted $50,000 to be used for strikers' relief. It wasn't like this when Mother Bloor traversed the steel country thirty years ago, fighting for the unions and the right of free speech.

These incidents express a trend which has not come to full fruition, which is



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spotty and undeveloped in many communities, and which might even be reversed if the unions don't work to broaden it or if there is violence and a back-to-work drive. Already in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and other communities police are swinging their clubs in the same old way. Yet within this trend at the present moment there is a new realization on the part of workers that the fight is political as well as on the picket line. At Sharon, where union committee meetings are opened and closed with prayer, pickets were falling out of line to scribble cards to Senator Bilbo condemning his filibuster and asking for passage of the Fair Employment Act. In addition there are a good many, if not enough, manifestations of rank and file AFL unity with the strikers, as well as instances of joint picketing between the United Electrical Workers and the United Steel Workers. The AFL restaurant workers union is running many strike kitchens in Pennsylvania and Ohio and Erie Railway workers, members of the Railroad Brotherhoods, have refused to move freight in or out of the Westinghouse [illegible], where the world's larg[illegible]rs are manufactured. In [illegible] teamsters' locals have pledged support to the Sharon strikers. Times are changing. It is this whole picture, multiplied to a national scale, that has played its part in bringing victories at Ford and Chrysler, in permitting the packers to return to work under conditions favorable to victory, and in placing the steel and electrical workers in a position that will undoubtedly end in success. It is easy to agree with Elmer Kish, chairman of the picketing committee at the Homestead strike, when he says, "This whole strike movement is different from anything before. It's something new."

LET's take Homestead, a steel city of about 20,000, and across the Monongahela River from Pittsburgh, as a case history perhaps representative to a degree of the national strike situation. As you go over the High Level Bridge and look down the river at the bluffs and gullies ascending steeply on the Pittsburgh side, silver puffs of smoke and steam punctuate the raw gray air and the red and green of railway signal lights brightly dot even the daylight of Pittsburgh's grimy atmosphere. It was just at dusk when I crossed the bridge and on either side was the Carnegie-Illinois plant, a gigantic, black shadow stretching endlessly, the tall chimneys of blast furnaces protruding

Philip Evergood

so thickly from the roofs that they formed a queer kind of mechanical forest. Ordinarily the brilliance of hot metal being poured from ladles into moulds fights for outlet into the night, escaping from every crack and door until the whole huge plant is framed in glow; but now the only light in the blackness is the rhythmic winking of lamps spacing the plant yards, their rays directed to the ground below, flashing on and off, on and off.

The High Level Bridge terminates on Homestead's main street, whose name is Fifth Avenue but whose appearance is so standardized that it might serve as a stage set for any American business street. Streetcars were clanging along and the red and blue, green and yellow neon lights, somehow cold and isolate in the night, told of Tom's Candy Shoppe and of the Homestead Radio Co. and the Amos Supermarket and of Lennie's Tavern, Redshaw Men's Wear, Shepherd's Jewelry, Liggett's Rexal Drugs, Valentine Greeting Cards, Children's and Ladies' Wear, and Schwadron's Wall Paper and Paint. If one had been placed on the corner blindfold and asked to guess where he was he might have said, so neutral was the scene, Chicago or Birmingham, Cambridge or Houston, for surely he would have found no clue in the gasoline stations, drugstores and supermarkets, nor in the Honor Roll of Veterans under an American shield and eagle on one corner. The billboard must have contained at least 2,000 names and I noticed gold stars before the names of Joseph Trenka, Paul Carpe, Alfredrick Blaylock and perhaps a dozen others, most of whom must have worked in the steel mills.

I STOOD there, a little disappointed in the normalcy of the scene, when far away I heard a vast and cosmic singing. It came rapidly nearer, becoming so loud that it was an assault almost unbearable, and it was apparent that this super-song came from a loudspeaker on a sound truck. It parked nearby and with a hard mechanical gaiety sang a blues number concerning the strike and its issues:

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I love my wife and I love my baby, too
I love my wife and I love my baby, too.
If I don't make more money
I know what I'm gonna do.
I ain't lyin' and what I say is true
If I don't make more money
I know what I'm gonna do.
I'm gonna picket your factory
Till my shoes wear through.

I turned into Levine Bros. Hardware and was met at the door by a man with a Groucho Marx mustache—and something of his brisk wildness—who seemed to be the proprietor. "I just wanted to find out whether you favored the strikers," I began, and was about to continue when he shouted, "I most emphatically do! I most emphatically do! Come up to my office." I climbed up to his office in the rear which overlooked the store. A radio was playing and during silences of the sound truck outside the click of an adding machine and could be heard. Even the sound truck could not dispel that oily hardware smell of nails, bolts, wiring, batteries and grease. The proprietor suddenly appeared and said, "May I ask for your credentials?" When I told him I was from the NEW MASSES he shouted, "That was what I was afraid of! I don't go along with you guys but you've got a right to your view. Well! Eighty-five percent of the merchants of Homestead and Duquesne are for the strikers! Times are changing! I don't mind telling you that when I came out of the service after the last war I was all for breaking the 1919 strike. Law and order they called it. I don't go along with you guys but a lot has happened since then. I'm giving money and equipment. I'll give them anything I got. If labor goes—I'm a Jew you know—if labor goes we'll be next. But most merchants—" The sound truck suddenly erupted outside. The merchant's lips continued to open and shut for a moment but his words were drowned in song so all-pervasive that it seemed to press against the boundaries of the universe.

Benny Fairless lives in a great big place
Mr. Benny Fairless lives in a great big place
Every time he signs a check
He checks the check with Eugene Grace
I ain't lyin' and what I say is true
If I don't make more money I know what I'm going to do
I'm going to picket your factory till my shoes wear through.

"Yes sir," said the hardware merchant in the sudden stillness, "if they

Frank Kleinholz

"I want to join the picket line."

"Smiling cop."

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break labor, we'll have fascism. I don't go along with you guys but a lot of water has gone over the mill since 1919. I know this town. I was born and brought up here and I have a little dough and live in a nice part of town and I tell you even the supervisors, even the executives, feel a little sheepish. In their hearts they know the strikers are right. I tell you, I don't go along with you guys but I'd like to help you out. Get the story about the Amalgamated, the first steel workers union here. Why, they had to meet underground! They were blacklisted and killed. Talk to their sons! Talk to Evan Walters! His father was blacklisted and run out of town. They broke the Amalgamated but Walter's son Evan helped found the present Steelworkers union here and was elected its president. That's drama for you. I go hunting with Evan." When I rose to leave the merchant, who refused to give his name although it must have been Levine, had a sudden accession of cunning. "What did you say your name was?" he asked and when I told him he carefully wrote [illegible] a worthless caution against

A few doors down, L. Bickert, manager of a credit jewelry store, said most of the merchants were for the strikers and reported that the veterans on strike were very bitter. "Under Bradley's ruling they can't get compensation under the Bill of Rights if they go out on strike," he said. "Plain civilians in six weeks can draw twenty dollars a week for twenty weeks but the striking veterans can't get a red cent." I went into the National Family Store, where the manager said that industry was trying to smash the whole country as well as the unions. "Big business is trying to throw the country into a depression," he was saying when his telephone rang. His little girl was on the phone and he said, "How are you, baby doll? How's your sister? Now let Mama talk, I want to hear how baby is." He told his wife he was bringing some sausage home, hung up and turned his pale, bespectacled face toward me. "The shopkeeper can't live when the worker don't get pay," he said.

The mercury was dropping and as I walked up the street towards the headquarters of Local 1397, largest steel local in the country, I fell in behind some strikers returning from picketing at the Amity Gate. They met a colleague returning from a gate known as The Hole in the Wall and one of them said to him, "No matter how you turn at Amity Street that wind goes right through you." The man from The Hole in the Wall seemed to feel that this was a reflection. "Listen," he said, "that Hole in the Wall is no Florida." He was a little man in a huge red and black mackinaw and he wore a hunting cap. He brooded a moment and repeated, "That Hole in the Wall's no cinch."

There was a meeting on in the union hall. It was as packed as the Times Square subway platform in the rush hour and it was so hot that it was nearly unbearable. These Americans of Croatian, Serbian, Welsh, Italian, Negro, Irish, English, Italian and Polish birth or ancestry stood stolidly in their overcoats and listened to Kish outline plans for mass picketing. In a few days, he said, there would be an all-girl picket line and on succeeding days picket lines composed exclusively of preachers, in one instance, of merchants in another, of AFL workers, of Negroes on another day, and veterans of the 1919 strike on still another. There would also, he said, be a picket line composed solely of survivors or descendants of survivors of 1892. On the wall above him was a large picture with the title "The Great Battle of Homestead. Defeat and Capture of the Invaders, July 6th, 1892." The hall was so stifling that I sought the cool night air and a large crowd stood on the sidewalk and in the street outside listening to the proceedings by means of a loudspeaker.

One of the speakers said that any union member who did not picket would be fined five dollars and a large man with a handsome dissolute face squeezed from person to person through the crowd saying, "God damn it; I won't stand for it. They got no right to fine me," but he did not succeed in getting a rise.

A streetcar approached slowly, the motorman stomping on his bell to make the crowd clear a way on the tracks. Again it was snowing, fine and small, slanting through the yellow of the street light. I met A. W. Berger, who told me he was a member of the City Council of Munhall, the only Democrat on it and the only striker. He said he had been chairman of the committee which erected the monument and although they advertised in the newspapers and made every effort they could not find the names of the strikers who had been killed in '92.

"They called the 1919 strike 'The Hunky Strike,'" he said. "They wouldn't dare do that now. These old timers, though, are the toughest guys we got on the picket line. They don't like to see us let anyone through. You know we let maintenance men through the lines to turn off valves and drain pipes and things like that."

The meeting was over and I went back into the union hall, where a few members were still hanging around. An elderly man with a fine face and gray hair—he was dressed rather well, too—suddenly stood up and began making a speech as if to himself, as if he did not give a damn whether any one listened or not.

"When I strike," he shouted in broken English, "I want everybody strike. When I work I want everybody work. I don't like this break the picket line." He went on at a great rate and Berger went over and tried to soothe him. "He's one of the old timers," Berger explained.

I talked to a group of Negroes who were gathered around a tall, seamy-faced Negro who told me that he was a preacher in his spare time. He said he did not like the suggestion of an all-Negro picket line, that it smacked of Jim Crow, but before he could develop his idea the hall was cleared with a demand that everybody in it go to the Main Gate for picketing. I walked for a time with an old man who said he had been born in Budapest and that he had been in the 1919 strike. He said he had seven children, two of them boys in the Navy. "I worry," he said, and he was difficult to understand, "for the young Yankee boy in the Army and Navy coming back to nothing. I don't worry about myself. I worry about young American people which I want to help."

A moment later he said, as if proud of it, "Mr. Berger is my pusher, that's my boss." I quickened my step and joined William O'Shele, a round elderly man with glasses and a hunting cap who said he had plenty of money, owned property and didn't need to worry but he was a striker anyway. "My uncle, Tom O'Shele," he said, was a '92 man," and there was more pride in his attitude than if he had reported ancestors arriving on the *Mayflower*. "He was an Amalgamated man," he continued. "That was the first union. Why, they met in cellars. I remember walking with him when I was a little boy when he pointed through a grating on a sidewalk and said, 'We used to have secret meetings there!'"

At the main gate there were some fifty pickets circling two gasoline

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drums, mounted on bricks and filled with coke. A girl in the uniform of the Wacs walked in the center and a man in uniform now and again yelled in a stentorian voice "Abrashki!" and everyone in line turned and walked the other way. I asked him what language it was and he said that he didn't know but that it meant "Turn the holy pictures to the wall." Those in line did not resemble the big-muscled pictures of labor drawn by the cartoonists. There were scholarly little men with a kind of European air about them and one man, as stolid and as well-dressed as an executive, carried an umbrella. There were girls who scarcely seemed out of high school, there were five or six Negroes, including the Negro preacher, and all-in-all the crowd was as representative as one seen at a baseball game.

A group of strikers watched the pickets and someone from the line called to one of the spectators, "Why ain't you in, Tim?" Tim said he had the rheumatism. "That's one for the book," Tim's questioner said. Now and again someone in the line would call to a spectator as he left, "Take one for me, pal!"

Around and around the pickets went on their two-hour shift, and sometimes there would be long silences. When they did speak it was mostly about their work, about "hot metal" and the "right carbon" and "the Diesel on the floor" and charging buggies and ladles and cold metal and ingots. They talked about the possibility of blast furnaces cracking if they cooled off too quickly and seemed as anxious as if they owned the furnaces themselves.

It was here I met Evan Walters, former president of the local, whose father had been a leader in the 1892 strike. He had been born in Wales, Walters said, speaking of his father, and in general the steel industry here had been started by the Welsh. His father, he said, had been blacklisted after the strike and had travelled from one end of the country to the other trying unsuccessfully to get a job in a steel mill. Finally, and it was a blow to him, he went into the mines at California, Pa., but he was fired there when the boss told him to vote for a certain candidate and he said, "I'd sooner vote for a yellow dog." He was arrested shortly before he died when Charles Schwab came to Homestead in 1922 ostentatiously driving through its streets in a kind of triumphal homecoming behind a team of spanking grays. The old man ran out on his porch, his wife clawing at his coat tails, and booed so long and lustily that the police came. Evan Walters said that he was very proud of his father and that he would always try to live up to his heritage.

THE next day I went up to Sharon, where 8,000 electrical workers are on strike at the Westinghouse plant. It is one of the best organized strikes in the United States. Ninety percent of those in it have never been on strike before, while many of them confess to arguing long and loud against the CIO not many years ago. Cuts ranging from sixty to thirty percent have changed their views. The war veterans of Sharon are extremely bitter and have had a number of meetings protesting the fact that they can receive no unemployment compensation under the GI Bill of Rights if they are on strike. Steve Branzovich, a veteran with an injured leg, said industrialists were trying to turn veterans against labor and were succeeding in some instances. "I don't want to fight my brother," he said. "I don't want to fight my people. But I want as much as the next guy. Everybody but the veterans will soon be getting unemployment insurance. I want a club, too. You knock your brains out fighting and come back and this is what happens. It's rough. My wife and baby and me are living with my mother. We can't even get a home. I can't get a thing I want. That's the big postwar world they were always telling us about. It's a bad let-down."

Fred Gardner, a tall stout man with a round earnest face, is the International representative of the United Electrical Workers who organized the Sharon strike. He is conscientious, nervous and given to worry. He hates cities and constantly yearns for his native Dakota. He is an amiable fellow, stubborn about only one thing: he insists on a yearly leave of absence permitting him to hunt in the Black Hills. He is thirty-seven years old and has been an organizer for about ten years, at considerable cost to his nervous system.

On the night before the strike's beginning he was in quite a state. He began to doubt whether he could pull it off. He checked over the complicated structure of committees, plans, food, picketing, welfare, public speaking and a hundred other details that must operate flawlessly if a strike is to be won. He was in his hotel room and it seemed to him that he had done everything wrong. He left a call with the hotel clerk for five in the morning. There was to be a mass picket line at six-thirty. He finally dropped off to sleep and suddenly jerked awake and grabbed the telephone. "Why didn't you call me?" he shouted to the clerk. He was told that it was not yet midnight. At four he could stand it no longer and went down to the strike headquarters and worked on picket signs. At six o'clock not one picket had turned up. At six-fifteen there were only seven. But at six-thirty there were 5,000.

Joseph Hirsch

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BETHLEHEM BEGINNING

By MILLEN BRAND

THEY say the end is contained in the beginning. This is the story of the country's greatest single strike as it began at Bethlehem, Pa.

When I arrived in Bethlehem Friday, the eighteenth, to cover the strike if there should be a strike, President Truman's 18½-cent offer to steel had just been rejected by management. The men in the UAW-CIO union office were not surprised. The office is a two-story building at 218 East Third Street, under the shadow of the plant on the South Side. On the ground floor are windows for dues-paying, etc., and in the back a meeting hall. Upstairs are offices and committee rooms, soon to be converted into soup kitchen and temporary sleeping quarters for the overworked officers.

Across the street a short distance down is the first plant gate, with heavy, steel canopies for the Behind the gate, the mono- rises in vast roofs and chimneys.

The union office is crowded with men, men from the many backgrounds of the South Side—Slav, Hungarian, Croatian, Russian, Negro, Italian, Irish, Greek. In the union office windows are the endless names of the men representing these groups who have fought and died in the war.

The talk is tense. Foremen and supers are already sleeping in the plant, as they did in the last strike. Just before the war, there was a short, bloody strike provoked by the company's scheduling of a company union election. Gas and smashed heads failed to break the strike and the CIO was voted in. The men and union officers told me stories of irresponsible company provocation during the war, which the men took. There was no strike during the war. But the way the workers feel about Bethlehem Steel is indicated by the recent strike vote. On a day when they had to go long distances through rain to vote, 11,000 workers voted nine to one to strike, as against a nation-wide five to one vote. The union rolls contain 14,100 out of the 15,000 production workers in the plant.

One of the steel workers said to me: "We're not going to give up this union. We've made it strong. Our whole lives depend on it. Make no mistake, everything depends on the union."

Company tactics were discussed. There were too many cots in the plant, the men had seen them. Who was going to use them? There were big stores of food and meat inside, some of it going rotten, the men said. "They're getting all them box cars lined up there—" "That's company psychology."

Rumors are provocation in a strike. The strikers have a rumor-busting committee. All strikers are warned that the real facts will be rushed to the picket lines in thousands of leaflets and that unless the news is in an official union bulletin, it is strictly N. G.

The union committees are all set: the Strike Committee chaired by Frank Vadasz, the Finance Committee with Hugh Mahoney and other officers, the Policing Committee, chaired by Fred Pepper, the Publicity Committee, chaired by Joe Kuzma, the Food and Kitchen Committee, chaired by Michael Skertic, and the Servicemen's Committee, chaired by Stephen Kazik.

One of the men, a charter member of the union, a rigger and construction worker, told me he gets a dollar-six an hour, including bonus, for repairing blast furnaces 125 feet in the air, hanging with one arm and working with the other arm. "It's dangerous, any way you look at it." This same rigger's father worked in the plant twenty-six years and died in the plant, wrung out by work. "They don't have to tell me what we're fighting for."

Take-home pay for many men has dropped in the neighborhood of half since the war. One man reported seven kids to feed, another nine. "Prices going up," One man with a black start of beard said, "I don't shave till we get two dollars a day."

The men are spending their war bond savings, and still falling behind. But important as the money and take-home pay issue is, the main thing the men feel is that the company is out to bust the union. The company has refused to meet the President's offer. The men know Kaiser has settled and told the steel industry that an infinitesimal margin of cost is involved. These men are thinking—thinking about the grievance committee and the handling of grievances, whose step-by-step record is up on the union office bulletin board; thinking about hard-won rights, about the union that supports them day by day. The men know the score.

How about the town?

Hirsch

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I TALKED to a shoe store proprietor on the South Side. "I'm a deep labor man," he said. "That don't mean you got to join a union, but—you got to go to the roots. You got to take care of what's down below—right?—then you got something up above. This two dollars a day—it don't buy a shirt."

A drugstore girl clerk said, "The President must have looked into it, he must know what the company makes and what it can afford. I wouldn't want to have to count Eugene Grace's money."

I talked to many merchants and townspeople on the South Side where feeling is openly for the strikers. Then I walked across the bridge to the North Side. People here were more noncommittal. A shirt-shop manager said, "My trade is mostly salaried men. They're my friends. Some of them came in this week and said good-by to me—they're going into the plant. But I'll tell you, some of them say the company could do better by the men." I talked with an office worker in steel. "I'm not a corporation man, understand. I was a relief investigator during the depression. I fought for people on relief. This is a fight now, the same kind." Even on the North Side, a third to half the people I spoke with were for the strikers.

A union man himself told me this story. "I had a pair of shoes repaired. The shoemaker knew me, knew I worked in steel, and I seen he done a good job and I said, 'I guess you knew I had to have these for the picket line.' 'Yeah,' he said, 'I made them good. And about pay, don't pay me. You need all you got for the strike.'"

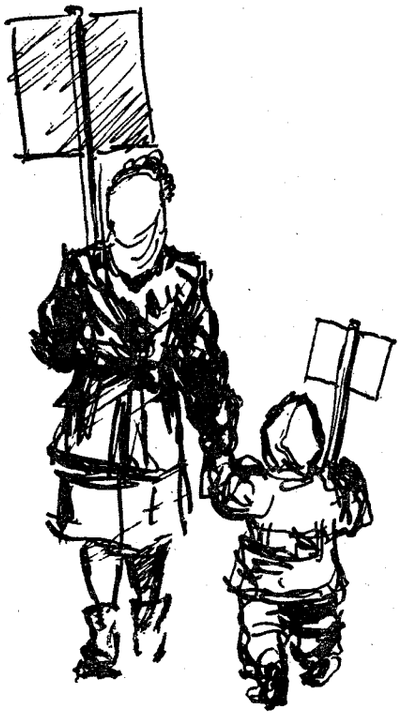
On Saturday, at the union office, passes were being given out for the workers in the coke works inside the plant which supply illuminating gas for Bethlehem and Allentown. The passes were countersigned by a number of union officials and stamped with the union seal. One official was seated signing the passes, slowly and deliberately. The union was giving the orders now. The union. Who said the union can't "manage"? Ask the workers if it takes organization to run a strike, organization and discipline.

There is anger, plenty of it. But the men are training themselves to hold it for the long pull, and to resist provocation if it comes.

The union has given Mayor Pfeifle assurances of peaceful picketing. There will be no violence from their side. The union wants to cooperate with the community fully and wants to keep the plant ready for production as soon as the strike ends. Their own interests call for an unharmed plant, and for order.

Saturday goes by almost unnoticed. Sunday dawns, raw and cold, and now, with last-minute precision, out-of-town reporters come. The strike is really going through! There is no breath of a word from management and the fires are dying down or are dead. Smoke wanes from the plant chimneys and the men who must feed their families from thirty- and forty-dollar paychecks now must prepare to feed them from nothing. All union officials have cancelled their union pay. They are on the level of all strikers.

IS A strike easy? Is it a vacation for labor? Already thousands are out of work in the Bethlehem area, laid off. There will be no jobs to turn to. General Electric, which is planning to start a factory in the area, now makes statements about delaying because of the strike, statements to alarm steel and non-steel workers hoping for jobs in the new plant.



Veterans in steel discuss their problem. Promised work by the company, many were hired and dropped as departments folded after the war. A personnel official in another plant told me that veterans who have been let out of steel apply regularly for jobs.

Time draws towards the deadline. There is to be a mass meeting at the Quinn Technical High School on the South Side, Sunday night. From there the strikers will go to the picket lines. There will be mass picketing Sunday night, and from Monday on, four-hour shifts will take over. The men and picket captains are instructed and the day darkens into early evening.

At seven the auditorium begins to fill and the school corridors are lined with serious-faced waiting men. The auditorium is the usual high school auditorium with a balcony in the back. The stage has a double row of chairs placed before a lemon-yellow group of four windows left from some amateur theatrical show. A loudspeaker sings unions songs, but the men are silent. A record hits a broken groove and repeats, and the men laugh, but only slightly. The hall begins to jam, the downstairs and the balcony are filled, the spaces along the wall are filled, the corridors are filled, and thousands wait outside, under loudspeakers that carry to them everything said in the auditorium.

Now the loudspeaker calls the union officers up on the platform. They come up out of the ranks of the men. Joe Kuzma, the chairman, comes forward to the rostrum, and out into the seriousness of the hall go his first words: "Brothers, the chips are down." These words are echoed by other speakers. Joe introduces the union officers, elected by the men. It is clear what relationship exists here between platform and audience. The local officers are men who work steel, whose lives and character are known; the officers are friends, working men themselves. Martin Stern's face, Mitch's face, Red's face, Joe's face—faces of leaders and brothers.

THIS is a center of history. These thousands and other thousands are fighting for themselves and for the good of the country, against the kind of economy that leads to depression, against the kind of psychology that leads to human degradation. There is no least sign of racial or national enmity here. There is only a common cause. This is a place of health.

Following the national anthem, Father Gilly, a Catholic priest with a steel-workers' parish, prays for the cause of the strikers and exhorts them to unity and courage. The local union officers speak. C. B. Newell, the district director, speaks. John Riffe, the International field representative, speaks.

One of the officers tells the workers

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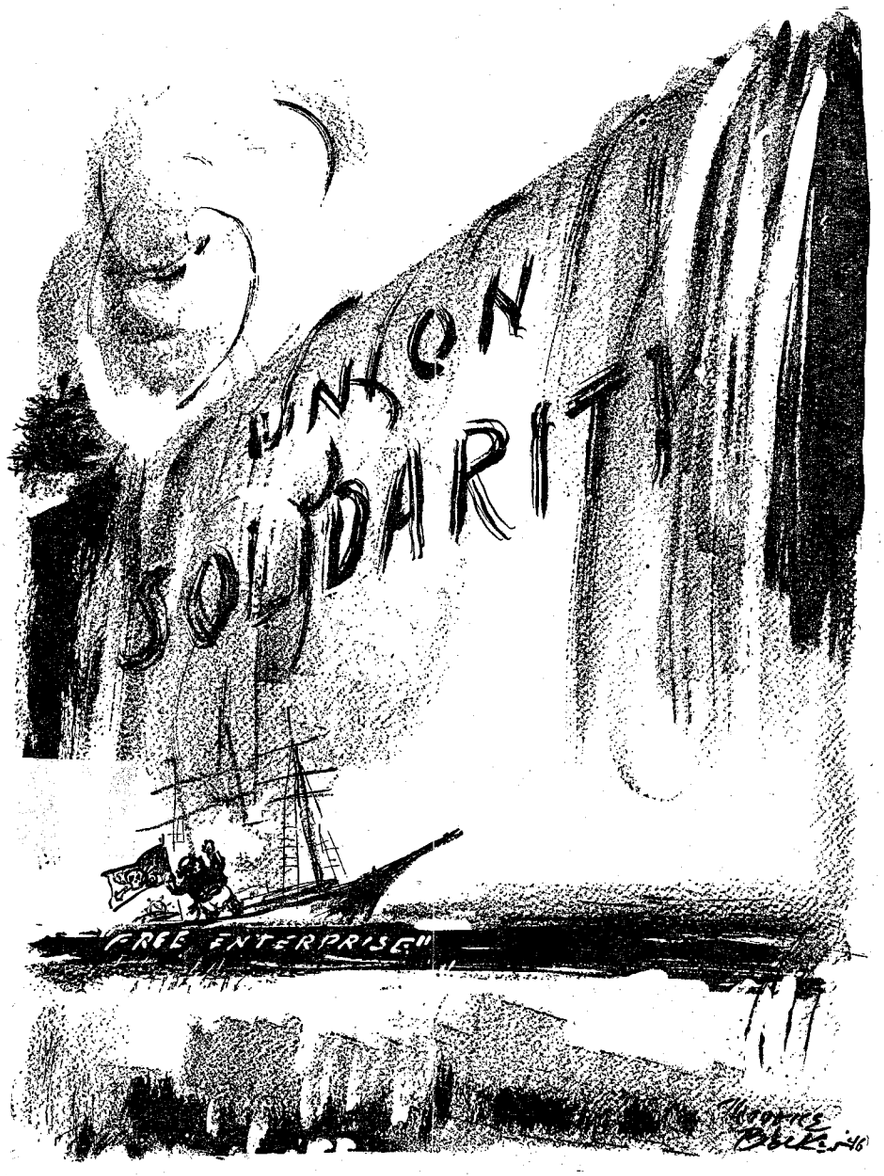
Maurice Becker



that a local bakery, Meiskin's, has made an offer to help the union. If there are any bakers in the union, they can come to his bakery. He will supply the pans, the ovens, the heat, and "even the materials," and "they can bake bread for the union." The men cheer. Offers of food from local merchants are announced.

Pledges of solidarity from other unions are read.

A welcome is given the women at the meeting.

Again the men are cautioned against company provocation. "If the company tries to send you home from the coke works, don't go unless they use physical force. Protest to the police and let the public know who's stopping essential services."

But beyond these instructional matters there is only the note of courage, of fraternity in the coming fight, of victory.

The final quiet word comes: "We adjourn from here to the picket line."

Now the men come up front and grasp the picket signs. DON'T CROSS THE PICKET LINE. . . . MURRAY ACCEPTS—FAIRLESS REJECTS. . . . WE WANT FAIRNESS, TWO DOLLARS A DAY. . . . EUGENE GRACE, WHAT'S THE DEAL—TWO DOLLARS A DAY OR NO STEEL . . . and so on. Individual white signs, PICKET, are stuck in hats. The men pour out of the hall.

OUTSIDE it has just begun to snow. The ground is turning white, and the first heavy fall begins to cover hats and shoulders. The men in pairs and groups go down the side streets to East Third and turn down along the company fence towards the gates.

A man hurrying along with a sign says: "This time we must win. Nineteen twenty—I remember—we lose. Three months we strike. Must win now. Mine daughters tomorrow, they go on picket line."

A boy comes out of a gate and crosses the street. He comes to a picket. "How was the meeting?" he says. There is friendship in his eyes. "The meeting? Swell," he is told.

The pickets begin to gather at the gates.

At one of the gates I come to men already quietly marching up and down in the snow. They feel the cold. "Well, Jim, you shoulda been a baker. You could be inside now, warm, makin' that bread."

"Yeah." An interval of silence. "You know, we oughta be striking for a closed shop—"

"If we had a closed shop, wouldn't have all these colds." Laughter. "Should have a closed shop."

The plant guard nods from inside the gate. He is warm in his little house. The union picket captain for the gate arrives. He is a Negro, short, with a blue band, PICKET CAPTAIN, on his arm. The men discuss with him where the local telephone is, across the railroad tracks, in case help should have to be called. They discuss making fires in steel barrels.

Again all merges into silence and marching. Deep below the fence, piles of scrap iron and huge pipes have the definition of snow and shadow. Magnetic lifts hang motionless like suspended sewer covers. Little gondola cars stand in frozen rows. Silence proves the power of the men and proves they want control over their own lives. The marching line is the seal of solidarity and the stamp of victory.

●

A friendly character who sometimes finds himself wandering around among the shady lanes in the vicinity of Wall Street brings us back a report on the current worry of the big insurance companies. It's the atom bomb. But it's not a panic over what will happen when the development of atomic energy begins to cut in on all the money they've invested in utilities and whatnot. Oh, no. It's a worry about what will happen to their actuarial tables if an atom bomb is plunked in the middle of the USA from Argentina.

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IT'S NOT THE JUNGLE ANY MORE

By HOWARD FAST

Chicago.

You will remember how, in *The Jungle*, Jurgis, the indomitable, is beaten down by the Chicago stockyards, conquered by them; you will remember how death was the final answer the yards gave his people. It is two generations since Upton Sinclair wrote that fine study of the Chicago meatpacking industry, and even at that time, in 1905, there were thirty years of struggle in the stockyards' past.

I would ask you to keep that in mind when you read about the current developments in packing. The United Packinghouse Workers of America, CIO, did not come of nothing; this splendid and militant industrial union did not just happen: three-quarters of a century of struggle went into the making of it. How many lives went into the making of it, no one can estimate—any more than one can estimate the suffering, the unrecorded and ungilded heroism, the incredible organizational patience, and the amount of major as well as minor tragedy.

But today the union is there, the fact and the result of this epic struggle; and the union has called a strike. The reasons for the strike were most simple and most uncomplicated; they can be stated in one sentence: that the average packinghouse worker, within the price framework of today, does not earn enough money to keep himself and his family free from the menace of hunger and cold. That is all. Regardless of what you have been reading in your paper, this—and this alone—is the reason for the strike.

I have just returned from Chicago; I saw the strike on the first day—and for the five days which followed, I watched the picket lines, spoke to the workers, prowled through the soup kitchens, and sat in on strike meetings. It was something to see and something to remember; it was also something to line up with the past.

The last great strike of the Chicago packing industry was in 1921. Before that there had been forty-five years of unspeakable working conditions, unorganized and uncoordinated strikes, depressed wages; taken all together, a local and infamous hell on earth. The "yards" was a place where a man could usually find work, and where, after more or less time, a man would lose his soul as well as his body. So evil was the reputation of the place that it became an accepted policy with the packers to advertise, in the most fraudulent terms, in foreign countries, and to import foreign workers by the thousands. As Eugene Debs said at the time, "The place is a stink and an abomination in the nostrils of the world." Along with this, the "yards" gave premium work to the Pinkertons, developed an unparalleled blacklist, and along with that methods of violence which the steel and mine operators hardly matched.

By 1921 some of these conditions had changed; many remained unchanged. When the workers went out on strike then, they had no large industrial union and they had no basic concept of unity. They were rent by factional struggle, and finally, thousands of Negroes were brought in to break the strike.

Today, many of those same Negroes and many of their children are the most militant members of the new UPWA. Sixty percent of the UPWA in Chicago is colored—and no packing strike in Chicago will be broken again by pitting black against white.

Nowhere have I seen such firm and consistent unity of Negro and white as out there in Chicago, in the yards. Both races are in the leadership as well as in the rank and file, and white men take Negro leadership as willingly and as wholly as Negroes take the leadership of whites. I talked to at least twenty white workers about Sam Parks, Negro, president of Local 25 and finance secretary of District I; they did not merely praise him; they spoke of him in all the terms men use

The Knife

(*For a Veteran Not Yet Home*)

Your name is in me like a knife
I turn at twilight to our former paths:
evening cuts me.

Or lie throughout the rigid night
blind to all we knew:
the blade is wide awake as pain.

Broad noon, the sanity of shops and job:
knife's narrow edge a precipice
to hurl me screaming down.

Only the anaesthesia of your touch
can soften this sharpest terror,
and later draw it out

knife, neat, useful:
bread to eat, house to build, fresh flowers plucked
like rain in the arid air.

Eve Merriam.

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Professionals And Picket Lines

• The Newspaper Guild at "Billboard," magazine of the theatrical trade, is locked out over the renewal of its contract, which contains demands for a twenty percent increase. Its chairman, Paul Ross, was arrested on charges of disorderly conduct for yelling "Scab." "Billboard" strikers have launched a paper of their own, the "Billboard Guildsman," servicing the theatrical trade during the strike.

• Fifty doctors and dentists in Manhattan volunteered their services free to the striking ACA workers out at Western Union.

• Two hundred artists and writers from the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions joined the Western Union line on January 26. Representatives from the committee will march every day on the line thereafter.

• The ICC also purchased a half page [illegible] New York "Times" answering [illegible] its co-conspirators, headed, [illegible] is the public, anyway?"

• The Newspaper Guild volunteered to supply and pay for a full-time expert to assist the ACA at Western Union in publicity and putting out their strike paper. The first issue is already out.

• Stage for Action presented Canada Lee, Kenneth Spencer, Josh White, Gordon Heath and others as picket line entertainment at Western Union.

• In East Boston eleven ministers, Episcopalian, Unitarian, Methodist and others joined the line of UE workers picketing the GE plant; in Chicago three Catholic priests picketed for the striking Packinghouse workers; in Brooklyn a rabbi joined the line.

And as for you: Add to these random notes that everywhere everyone who can, and this includes professionals, is digging into his pockets to build the strike funds, to keep those pantries and soup kitchens supplied for the army of the people. NEW MASSES READERS: bring your contributions to New Masses' office, 104 East Ninth Street, New York 3, N. Y., or go to your local Industrial Union Council if you live outside New York. New Masses has sent over five hundred dollars worth of food, but it takes a lot of food to feed a million and a half people. Have you done your share?

to describe another man they love. I listened to and watched local Negro leaders reporting to Herb March, head of the over-all strategy committee; it took just a little while for the difference in skin color to become meaningless—this was man in relation to man, pure and simple.

In the Chicago of today and in the America of today, a situation like this is no small achievement. It is an indication of the health of the UPWA, and it must be examined against the background of organizational struggle this union has waged. It must also be examined in relation to such men as Sam Parks and Herb March, to name only two of many fine leaders in packing. Otherwise, it could be considered a miracle, and could be approached with as little understanding as that with which one sometimes approaches a so-called miracle.

Men like these built the union. They built it, from the very first, with Negroes, Poles, Mexicans, Lithuanians, Croats—any many other national minority groups as an integral part of its structure. They built it as an honest, fighting industrial union, with the needs of its membership as the first item on the agenda at all times. Most of the union leaders still work in the shops; the rest of them came from the shops. They aren't career men. They are amazingly straight-forward in both their demands and their concept of strike action; they don't equivocate, and their strategy is fully comprehensible to the rank and file.

If I seem to harp on the subject of Negro-white unity, I do so because it is not only a basic test in terms of trade unionism, but one of the pivotal factors in this America we live in. The fact that the UPWA soup kitchens, whether on South Racine, or on McDowell, or on South Halsted, had Negroes along with whites working in the pantries, as well as Negroes and whites sitting together at the long board tables, should be the national norm; but it is not the national norm, and we must take note of the fact in terms of a real democratic achievement. And it is in the light of such facts that Negro and white veterans marched shoulder to shoulder on the packinghouse picket lines. Unity is an oft-used and very often misused word, but it is only out of an understanding of the word and all it implies that the leaders of the UPWA were able to build the kind of a union they have.

They did not merely organize the packinghouse workers; they educated them. They taught them the full dignity of work in an industry so needful to the good of the nation. A job in packing became a permanent and respected worker's place, instead of the bottom rung on a ladder going down. Today, the men in packing are proud; and it was with that pride that they marched onto the picket lines. They struck with discipline and a full realization of their responsibilities; and it was not they but the employers who committed the act against the nation, who refused to discuss terms, closed down the supply of meat, and told the American people to go to the devil and be damned.

Recognition of the justice of the UPWA demands was given by the broadest citizens' coalition ever gathered to support a Chicago strike. Two hundred thousand people joined in the Back of the Yards Council, to support the strikers, to give them both money and food. Two Catholic priests, Father Ambrose Ondrak of St. Michael's Church and Father Edward Plawinski of St. John of God's Church, walked on at least half of the picket lines, along with the workers. As the Guardian Angel Nursery, the Franciscian Sisters set up a soup kitchen and fed hundreds of strikers, as well as their children. And dozens of local merchants displayed signs in their windows, proclaiming their solidarity with the strikers.

Such things as these are not accidents, either; they are a manifestation of the union's relation to its membership and to the community. And if our government has, as the President so loudly and hollowly proclaims, any honorable intentions toward labor, these facts must be taken into consideration. To take over the plants at present wage levels and face the workers with federal bayonets is simply to revert to the murderous situation which Grover Cleveland promoted in Chicago in the nineties, when he used federal troops to shoot down the Pullman workers. He was called "Honest Grover," a name which has an empty sound down through the years, and he too was a Democratic President.

There can be only one evidence of governmental good faith in taking the plants—and that is the granting of a wage raise sufficient to enable the workers to live—and the size of that raise *must* be determined by the union as well as the companies, in fair bargaining. Otherwise, President Truman becomes the overt ally of the meat trusts—against the American people, to whom he appealed so blatantly, and divisively.

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RESOLUTION
by
STAMFORD RETAIL MERCHANTS

Whereas: The workers of Yale & Towne Mfg. Co. have been on strike for the past 11 weeks, and

Whereas: The families of these Yale & Towne workers are in need of financial assistance. In order to support their families, the workers have had to deplete their limited savings accounts, and, in many instances have been forced to cash in their War Bonds, and

Whereas: The Union treasury is too small to pay adequate strike benefits to 3,000 families and

Whereas: The early settlement of the strike and the establishment of decent wage standards is of the utmost importance to Stamford, now, therefor

Be It Resolved: That we, the undersigned merchants of Stamford, urge the management of the Yale & Towne Mfg. Co. to meet with the negotiating committee of the International Association of Machinists in a spirit of cooperation for "real" collective bargaining in order to arrive at a wage settlement that is in keeping with the American standard of living, and

We pledge our efforts on behalf of the families of the striking workers, and agree to make weekly contributions to the strike fund in order to maintain the health standards of the workers and their families.

AL'S RADIO SALES-SERVICE
ARLENE ANGRIST
ATLANTIC CIGAR STORE
ATLANTIC JEWELERS
ATLANTIC MEAT MARKET
ATLANTIC SHOE REPAIR
ATLANTIC WINE & LIQUOR STORE
AUGUSTA SHOPPE
BAUMAN'S KIDDYLAND
BAZAAR CLOTHING STORE
BEDFORD DRUG STORE
BEN'S SERVICE STATION
BERNARD E. GIFT SHOP
BEST MADE MATTRESS SHOP
BIG CHIEF MARKET
BLOOMFIELD'S DELICATESSEN
BRADLEY'S
BUTTERFIELD MARKET
CASSULO GROCERY
CENTRAL LUNCH
CENTRAL SHOE REPAIRING
CHARLIE'S DINER
CHAUSKY HARDWARE CO.
CHEZ LOU RESTAURANT
CITY MARKET
CLAIRE DRESS SHOP
CLARK'S HILL DINER
COLBI, Jeweler
CONETTA BROS. Floor Covering
CONSOLIDATED FURNITURE CO
COPPOLA, Tailor
A. V. CORBO, Shoes
COTTAGE BAKE SHOP
CROYDON'S MEN'S SHOP
DAISY KIDDIE SHOPPE
DANBURY HAT SHOP
DAVID'S
G. DAVIS, Tailor
deBRUYCKER BAKE SHOP
ECONOMY MUSIC SHOP
EDDIE'S BARBER SHOP
ENGEL'S FUR SHOP
EPSTEIN BROS.
FAIR STORE
FAY'S
B. FINE & SONS
FINN'S RESTAURANT
P. J. FISCHER SERVICE STATION
FOSTER CO.
H. FRANKEL & SONS
FRANK'S DELICATESSEN AND FRUIT MARKET
FRANK'S RADIO
FREEMAN'S YARN STORE
FRENCH RADIO & ELECTRIC
FRENCH SHOP
FURER'S, Inc.
JOHN GARDELLA & SONS
GELB LIQUORS
GERARDI'S GROCERY STORE
GLENBROOK TAVERN
GOLDBERG GROCERY
GOLDMAN & SONS, Tailors
GOTTFRIED'S SILK SHOP
GRAND CENTRAL MARKET
GRANELLI, Grocer
GREAT PENNY STORES
GREENBERG'S Children's Store
WM. GORDON, Jeweler
H. GRIGST, Antiques
HAMILTON LIQUOR STORE
HAMILTON MARKET
HAMILTON STATIONERY STORE
HARRY'S BARBER SHOP
HARVEY'S FRUIT MARKET
HELM STUDIOS
HEWITT SERVICE STATION
HILTON'S
HIRSCH'S FUR SHOP
HEIN'S SERVICE STATION
HOGAN'S MARKET
HOLLYWOOD TAILORS

Please study this page. This is what happened in one strike-bound town—Stamford, Conn. It could happen everywhere, if our readers follow Mr. Kweskin's example. Get your neighbors, your shopkeepers, your whole community to go and do likewise.

ALBERT J. CRAMER, Agent
INSURANCE - BONDS
492 MAIN STREET
STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT

Jan.21,1946

The New Masses
104 East Ninth St.
New York,N.Y.

Gentlemen:

A friend of mine called my attention to your article "New Day in Stamford" in your issue of Jan.22,1946.

I am the "operator of a second-hand and antiquestore" mentioned in your article,which is well reported and captures the spirit of Stamford during this labor strife.

It may interest you to know that I initiated a business men's committee of seven local merchants with the results shown in the enclosed advertisement.

One week previous to this advertisement we took a full page in "The Stamford Advocate",printing the same resolution and listing 115 merchants who are contributing weekly. As you will notice in the enclosed Stamford Shopper advertisement our list of merchants has grown to 197 . Since the publication of the latest list we have added another 25 contributors.

The merchants are donating from one dollar to ten dollars depending upon the size of the store and the feeling of each merchant. The amount collected weekly runs over $700.00 and we hope to hit a thousand a week before the thing is over.

The list of contributors has been turned over to the I.A.M. local and they have appointed two girls to collect the donations weekly.

Very truly yours,
Yale J.Kweskin
492 MainSt.

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EARS OF THE MIND

HAVING set down in my last column some of the sovereign therapy that lies in Bach, I am tempted to pursue for one more moment a musical theme. The wordless nature of that art, which represents for many people a happy redemption from thought, seems to me, on the contrary, an invitation to it. So far from lulling our rational faculties, music is able to exercise them with unusual freedom. It supplies to thinking an occasion and a mood, without rigidly determining the content which shall be discussed. The "concord of sweet sounds" is likewise a concord of the whole Self, whose restless appetites and thoughts and feelings are made momentarily one.

Among all the composers Beethoven is the one most plainly conscious of a philosophical intent. In him exists no isolation of music from the common concourse of things, no fear of a program, no fanciful etiquette which should prevent his saying all that is in his mind. And if he were confronted with the doctrine that "a poem should not mean, but be," I think he would drown both it and its supporters in that wild, Gargantuan laughter which used to alarm his contemporaries. For Beethoven (as one sometimes forgets) was more than a genius; he was a man.

He was, in fact, a certain kind of man, appearing in a certain epoch and embracing within his character the noblest attributes which that epoch could engender. If Bach (like Milton) shows the somewhat austere grandeur of the early victors over medievalism, Beethoven shows in part the revolutionary sweep of capitalism across Europe. He lived at just that moment when the new society revealed itself paradoxically as a liberating and an enslaving force, when the Rights of Man stood triumphant over feudalism but began to fall, one by one, under the necessities of bourgeois life. When Beethoven struck from the *Eroica* his dedication to Napoleon, he was announcing his refusal to deteriorate with the society around him. He was quite willing to let the future supply the hero to whom, nameless and unknown, the *Eroica* stands dedicated. But no renegade, however famous, and no tyrant, however strong, could serve that office.

It was an important, and in many ways a decisive, test. The test lies in the fact that capitalism tends to frustrate the ideals which it has nourished. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity are valuable slogans against feudalism; but how can they be made compatible with profits for a few and poverty for the many, with chronic depressions and recurrent wars? Evidently men who are placed in such an environment have to make a choice; they can accept the ideals and therefore combat the system, or they can accept the system and therefore decline the ideals. If we choose the second of these alternatives, we slide pell-mell into a gulf whose horrors have not even yet been fully explored. But if we choose the first, then the giants of our fears shrink to their true size, the larger pathway is made plain, and we can see at no insuperable distance the world of our best hope.

Beethoven has been called a *Gefuelspolitiker*, a man whose politics were got by sentiment. The name, I fancy, is not wholly just; but even if it were so, it would be far less uncomplimentary than its user perhaps supposed. For when you have exhausted all that knowledge and intelligence can contribute to a choice of the right alternative, there remains the necessary lure of feeling which draws us at last into the struggle: a compassion for all things human, which moves among the captive peoples and, as it moves, unites. When Liszt, a prodigy of eleven, played for Beethoven, the master watched (for he could not hear) a little skeptically, but in the end embraced him, saying, "Well! You are a lucky one, and you will make other people happy. There is nothing finer than that." If such is the "politics of sentiment," we must certainly hope that it will abound.

BUT the thing which in Beethoven is most worthy of wonder is the way he embodied the individualist ideal. When early capitalism shifted interest from Divinity to Man, it was the individual human being who became the object of worship. This being was no longer a mere creature, nor yet a pilgrim between eternities, but a man of immense talents set against the vast and ignorant universe. There were defects in the conception; nevertheless, the ideal itself was a kind of phophecy that in the end the physical world would have to submit to human purposes.

In Beethoven the ideal flamed with a splendor never to be extinguished. He suffered incredibly. The deafness which grew upon him from his thirty-second year seemed certain to eclipse his genius. Nothing in the external world favored him: his love was thwarted, his friendship often ill-repaid, his economic condition always necessitous. But creativity, once in motion, is not so easily halted. The music continued, and not only so indeed, but deepened—deepened beyond the power of his contemporaries to hear. He began to listen, as one of his visitors said, "with the ears of the mind"; and as he did so, there grew into his music a speech that was beyond speech, a sound that was the breath of other worlds.

One hears that sound especially in the slow movement of the twelfth Quartet, where it steals out of the cello through the viola into the violins, bearing with it at once the agony and the cure. That quartet was a favorite of Beethoven's. "It needs to be heard often," he said to Rellstab. "How did you like it?" Poor Rellstab, who had found in it only the "debris of genius," knew not what to write in the notebook which Beethoven used as a means of conversation. At last he wrote, "I was perfectly and reverently moved in my heart." They regarded each other in silence. Then Beethoven rose and stood a long time by the window, looking out. He knew that his music was still unheard.

There are many honest Rellstabs, who have not yet learned to listen with the ears of the mind, who recognize greatness vaguely and allow its meaning to escape. But at least they do not refuse the vision and will not refuse the path when we have shown it them. As for Beethoven himself, has he not become in the second century of his life the entire human multitude, who, deaf and tormented, threatened and reviled, with their splendid talents constricted and their common love denied, nevertheless hear inwardly and record the music which a later age will play? I think it is so now and that it will be so hereafter. In Beethoven the nineteenth century produced a victorious man. In us let the twentieth produce a victorious people.

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I WELCOME AN INVESTIGATION-

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A LETTER TO LOUIS ADAMIC

By CAREY McWILLIAMS

DEAR LOUIS: When NEW MASSES asked me to review your latest book, *A Nation of Nations*,* I readily assented in the mistaken belief that the assignment would be a cinch. But when I actually started to write a review, I encountered all sorts of unexpected difficulties. We have been good friends for so many years that the idea of reviewing one of your books, instead of talking to you about it, seemed a ridiculously formal procedure. So I decided to write you a letter which NEW MASSES can publish, if they like, in lieu of a review.

I think the chapters in this book devoted, as they are, to the *story* of Americans from Italy, Spain and Mexico, France, Holland, Sweden, Russia, Germany, Yugoslavia, Norway, Greece, Poland, Ireland, and the chapter on the Negroes, have a unique value and importance at this time. In fact, the timing of the book could not have been more pertinent. For we are in the midst of one of those recurrent periods in American life when external and internal pressures have once again begun to find expression in racial, religious, and national "baiting" of one kind or another. As you said recently, "a psychological battle for postwar control" is now being waged in America, and, now as always, ial conflict rises, the various "minorities," so-called, eel the pinch of prejudice. I liked the idea of using ing amount of material you have gathered about ... groups covered in this book in the form of "stories." They are, indeed, wonderful stories, well told, and written with characteristic simplicity, candor and directness. No one writing in America today has an insight into "minority problems" equal to your own or is as capable as you are of interpreting the unique multi-racial, multi-ethnic background of America.

It has always seemed to me that America is your central preoccupation, your great theme, the subject matter, directly or indirectly, of all your books. The other day I was told that John Gunther is writing a book to be called *Inside America*. Well, it seems to me that you have been writing, in book after book, a magnificent "Inside America" these many years. For you have an endless curiosity about America: what it is really like; what makes it tick as a nation; why Americans are what they are. In the process of satisfying your own curiosity about America, you have opened the eyes of thousands of Americans to aspects and facets of American life of which they were never sharply aware. For this reason I have always thought that your books, including this latest volume, represent an important contribution to the development of a working thesis about America.

Of the chapters included in this volume, I particularly like those devoted to the Dutch and the Irish. Although I am familiar with the story of the Irish in America, I found much that was new and exciting in your chapter. You are quite right in exposing the widely prevalent Scotch-Irish myth, a myth that has long obscured important aspects of this particular "story." For example, I was brought up on the notion that my father's family was "Scotch-Irish." The theory seemed plausible enough to me, since there was no denying that they were Presbyterians, and pretty grim Presbyterians at that, despite the fact that my grandfather, a dissenter in all things, didn't think the Presbyterians were grim enough and so he became a hard-shell Baptist! I knew also, in a general way, that the family had come from the North of Ireland. Ten or fifteen years ago I discovered, more or less by chance, that this particular tribe of Americans were as Irish as the pigs of Dublin and that the "Scotch" part was largely a latter-day improvisation. What you say about the role that the Irish played in giving substance to the talk of independence, during the Revolutionary War, provides a sorely-needed correction to our thinking about this period. For subsequent editions of your book, I would suggest that you take a look at an altogether remarkable book by William Christie MacLeod, *The American Indian Frontier*, for some fascinating notes on the role of the real Scotch-Irish in American life. I also liked, as I am sure everyone will who reads your book, the thumb-nail biographies artfully placed throughout the volume, such, for example, as the story of Stephen Girard, of Philip Mazzei, of Henrik Peter Scholte, of Gus Korach and of Michael Anagnostopoulos. Better than facts or figures, more eloquently than theories or concepts, these stories drive home the point of America's unique cultural background.

I have only one or two queries to raise about your approach to this material. First of all, I have always been rather skeptical about the notion that this or that group "contributed" something or other to American culture. It seems to me that this approach to the subject raises far more questions than it answers, and that it usually starts an argument. The cultures of Europe have been nothing if not polyglot in origin and no one, at this late date, can unravel the specific "contributions" of any one group. For the process of borrowing, appropriating, and fusing has been complex and unending. Also, in your enthusiasm for good stories, I think that you are inclined to explain certain happenings and events in American history in terms of this or that "trait" or "characteristic" of a particular ethnic stock, when the explanation may more properly be found in another quarter. For example, you imply that the French failed as colonizers in America because they possessed certain cultural traits (incidentally, it is not always clear that you are talking about *cultural* traits). This, it seems to me, is a debatable premise. What was the social structure of France like during these critical years? Isn't this the real key to the problem of explaining why the French lost out in America? And, also, aren't the developments inside England, for the same period, the best explanation for the success of the British as colonizers? Finally I wish that you had dealt with the Negro "story" at greater length and apart from these other "stories." To be sure, Negroes are immigrants; but this particular "story" should have been elaborated and dealt with, in general, in more incisive terms.

I am sure that you will be charged with having a marked bias against the so-called "Anglo-Saxons." Personally, I share your point of view; but I do think that a correction in emphasis might be noted. The dominance of the Anglo-Saxon is not mythical: it is a vivid fact. Whether we like the idea or not, whether it should be so or not, the fact is that the "majority" element (probably not a majority numerically) still insists that this is a White,

(*Continued on page 27*)

* Harper. $3.50.

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WHAT'S TRUMAN UP TO?

THERE are Presidents who thrive on crisis, grow big with it. One thinks of Jackson, of Lincoln, and in a different era of Franklin D. Roosevelt. And there are Presidents who are shrunk by crisis, made petulant and little. One thinks of Andrew Johnson, Herbert Hoover and Harry S. Truman. No one ever thought of Harry Truman as a big man, but it took the Presidency to show how very small he is. The storms howl, but the President of the United States speaks in a whisper. Though he lives in the White House, he prefers to be mistaken for the perennial innocent bystander, or, if you like, for that mythical character, John Q. Public. He is cutting the Presidency down to size.

How much of this is genuine befuddlement and incompetence and how much calculated pose it is difficult to say. President Truman, like his predecessor, operates on the assumptions of the economic status quo, known pseudonymously as "free enterprise." These assumptions are so much a part of our social and ideological environment that even people who know better sometimes forget what lies behind them. To state the obvious—that the basic function of capitalist government is to protect and perpetuate the conditions which make poverty for the many the price of privilege and power for the few—is to state what is habitually overlooked, yet what is central in our political scheme. However, not only the *what* of capitalist government, but the *how* is important. There is a difference between the governmental methods of reactionary capital and of liberal capital. It is not a fundamental difference, it is not a rock to lean on, yet it is folly to obscure the fact that the way of Hoover is not the way of Roosevelt. Moreover, since reactionary monopoly capital is the prime mover in the economy and customarily the dictator to government, the program of liberal capitalism can be advanced only through the initiative of labor and some form of provisional alliance with it. This was what Roosevelt learned.

What labor achieved in twelve years through its own efforts and the support of Roosevelt—achieved within the framework of monopoly capitalism and its limited democracy—sets a pattern which no later President can simply put away in a desk drawer. But the difference between the Roosevelt way and the Truman way—apart from the enormous difference in the quality of leadership—is that while Roosevelt wavered at times between progress and reaction, wavering has been elevated by Truman to the level of policy and principle. This is not only a question of temperament; basically it reflects the fact that the liberal capitalists are worried about the power of labor at home and the power of the Soviet Union and socialism abroad.

Abroad the President is resolving the dilemma by letting reaction have its head, with such occasional checks as world realities and our own people are able to impose. At home the problem is much more complicated. Because labor is a power he can neither accept nor reject it. What he yields in words he often annuls in deeds. He is trying to move in two directions at once—"cooling off" legislation plus a progressive social program—which in politics as in the physical world is a good way of getting nowhere. He wants to appear to stand above the grime of battle, to seem not merely neutral but a neuter, to become Everyman by professing to be No-man.

I had intended to discuss Mr. Truman's gargantuan message to Congress —the longest in history, though in reading it seems much longer—but his press conference of last week is really more revealing of the man and his method. He stood on his proposal of an 18½-cent-an-hour wage increase in steel, a proposal which the steel union has accepted and the companies have rejected. At the same time, he thought the strikes were a contest of power and that both sides had too much power. Those strikes were not in the public interest and the workers should go back, he said. "You think they ought to go back to work without an increase in wages?" he was asked.

The workers should return, the President replied, on the basis of the increase recommended. "How can the workers go back to work without an increase in wages?" he was again asked. They can't, Mr. Truman said. "But the meat packers will go back to work at the old wage scale, won't they?" (that is, with the government taking over the plants). The President replied that they would have to, as this was a provision of the law. Add up all his answers and you get zero.

Now what about this business about capital and labor having too much power? Has capital too much power? It has everything: it owns the factories, the banks, the transportation system and thereby controls the livelihood of millions and the means of life of all; it owns billions in individual and corporate wealth with all that this implies in the way of power over the rest of us; it owns newspapers and radio stations which mold public opinion in the big business pattern; it possesses federal, state and city governments whose prime purpose is to maintain this state of affairs and whose agencies, legislatures and courts are staffed in key posts largely by businessmen or their faithful satellites.

What about labor? In a society in which unemployment is a constant threat and almost half of America's families had at the wartime peak an income of less than forty dollars a week, labor has the power of organizing and by its collective effort wresting extra dollars to prevent hunger and extra political influence to prevent an unbroken array of Rankins and Tafts. Through such efforts it has the power of protecting and extending democracy. Is this power too much?

In fact, the very concept of "too much power" for labor is anti-democratic.

Labor is the modern engine of democracy, drawing the entire nation toward larger freedom. Clip labor's power and you clip the living standards and liberties of farmers, small businessmen, professional people—of all who, together with labor, constitute "the public." It is only under fascism that labor has no power because capital is all-powerful.

We ought to be thinking of more power for labor—more democracy for America—not less.

A. B. MAGIL.

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The De Gaulle Tactic

DE GAULLE'S resignation obviously does not mean the end of De Gaulle. He will return from his self-imposed Elba when he considers the moment tactically correct. For in himself he embodies, at this stage of French history, those bourbon forces readying for the inevitable showdown. His was a retreat, then, but not a rout—a retreat compelled by his inability to manipulate the Assembly and smother its sovereignty under a De Gaullist dictatorship. The symptoms of his autarchical disease were apparent long ago. Last November he tried to make the cabinet his exclusive toy. From then on it was only a matter of time before he would be compelled to bow out of the picture. The time he chose to take his leave is something only De Gaulle can explain, but its prime motivation was undeniably one of letting the Communists along with the left Socialists plow through the internal economic crisis by themselves. His calculation was that they would fail and then the country would plead for his return.

The Communists and their friends in the ranks of the Socialist Party have brilliantly avoided the trap set for them. The coalition still remains, even though it is an uneasy one. The Popular Republicans (MRP) have had little choice in determining whether to join in the coalition government or to stay out. They were compelled to come along because any other step would have meant desertion from the economic battle, with an even greater loss of prestige than they have already suffered through De Gaulle's departure. As it is the MRP is highly unstable. A conglomeration of rightists, clerics and sentimental Christian socialists, the MRP is one of those dangerous transitory phenomena reflective of a transitory state of affairs. Its future is solely dependent on whether it can adequately serve the cause of French reaction.

Meanwhile the critical need to increase French production will place especially heavy burdens on the Communists. They are the one group in France commanding the respect of most workers and they are the ones with the clearest plan of how production can be expanded through nationalization, breaking the hold of the trusts and purging the fascists who still command important posts. Whether the Socialists leadership will collaborate is always an open question. This time, however, the movement from below is more aggressive than ever before and the Socialist hierarchy stands to lose heavily if it fails to heed the demands for unity with the Communists.

France is the key to developments in western Europe. Washington and London know it. They will naturally pull in the direction which serves imperialism best. The old anti-De Gaullists here and abroad will become righteous partisans of whatever he plans and attempt to block—diplomatically, militarily, financially—the French working class from moving closer to the control of the state apparatus.

Witch Hunters Again

IT's a picture of which American fascists and their foreign allies may justly feel proud. The State Department authorizes the sale of five C-47 transport planes to Franco's fascist government. According to Walter Winchell, who has a pretty reliable nose for such things, two American shiploads of arms have recently arrived in Barcelona. And the Wood-Rankin (Dies) Committee, fortified in their crusade against democracy by the atmosphere thus created by our government's foreign policy, brings contempt proceedings against Helen R. Bryan, executive secretary of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee. Miss Bryan's "crime" was her refusal to place at the disposal of these witch-hunters the records, financial and otherwise, of the outstandingly splendid committee which she represents.

The Wood-Rankin Committee's request for the issuance of a contempt citation against Helen Bryan now goes to the House of Representatives where it may be called up for vote at any moment with the probability that debate will be limited to one hour. It is absolutely essential that all progressives see to it that the request be denied by having the motion defeated on the floor of Congress. For this evil congressional committee in bringing proceeding against Miss Bryan and her organization, and in demanding the records of other progressive groups, is showing its contempt for the American people and their democratic institutions. They must be promptly stopped in their tracks.

And more than that. The basic issue involved is the right of the Wood-Rankin Committee, whose every motive and every act seeks to undermine the purposes for which the war has been fought, to exist at all. We must defeat the attack upon the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, and we must go further and force the dissolution of the Wood-Rankin Committee itself.

Who Can Go to School?

THE year-and-a-half-old Mayor's Committee on Unity exploded a bombshell in City Hall last week when it presented a report which was a resounding indictment of the "quota" system denying Negroes, Jews and Catholics the special training due their abilities. Naming names, the report said bluntly what has long been known but rarely made a public issue: that graduates from colleges in New York City have great difficulty in getting into institutions of higher learning regardless of their records. It observed, moreover, that the situation, which has always been bad, has further deteriorated in the last decade.

The report has already created a widespread protest. Considerable agitation has appeared for the realization of a University of the State of New York, provided for on the statutes as early as 1784 but never brought into being except in the creation of the Board of Regents. This university, proponents claim, should be bias-free and provide some of the facilities, such as medical schools, now so gravely needed by veterans, among others. The good citizens are, however, mistaken if they believe that mere example of the new university would counteract the disgraceful facts aired by the committee. Those who have dealt with the strangling effects of the dry pogrom of the "quota systems" are not so romantic as to think emulation will be likely to follow.

The State Industrial Union Council of the CIO has come forward with the most workable program around which to rally the lively and justified indignation that the committee report provoked. That four-point program included: (1) the amendment of the Ives-Quinn act —the New York State FEPC—to end discrimination in the schools; (2) the withdrawal of tax exemption from institutions found guilty of discrimination; (3) the creation of a state university to enlarge educational opportunities in the state; (4) the inclusion of representatives of labor on the Board of Regents.

This program contains the indispensable minimum to achieve the necessary results, but it should be pointed out that federal intervention is required as well, particularly since hundreds of thousands of veterans will have their tuition fees paid by the government. But no decisive results will be obtained without strong public pressure for strengthening and enforcing state FEPC measures.

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READERS' FORUM

Howard Fast's Seamen

TO NEW MASSES I would like to comment on what I believe are a number of misconceptions in Howard Fast's otherwise fine series "The Gray Ship." These are:

1. That merchant seamen, as a group, are anti-fascists who understand the war and imperialism.

2. That merchant seamen, as a group, consciously braved torpedo and aerial attacks to deliver the goods.

3. That merchant seamen are civilians aboard their vessels and are treated as such.

Seamen during the war constituted a cross-section of the US population. Therefore, as a group, they had no better understanding of fascism or of the war itself than did the rest of the country. The core of pre-war trade unionists was swamped by the new men and as a result anti-Semitism, Negro-baiting and hatred of foreigners cropped up on American ships as it did in America itself.

Probably the largest single group of seamen was recruited by the War Shipping Administration, which operated on the feudal aristocratic principles that Americans met in the Army and the Navy. From 1943 on, they more and more constituted the greater body of seamen. The fact that many of them preferred the merchant marine instinctively to the aristocratic organization of the Army and Navy is no criticism of the men themselves: it is another in the criticisms of our undemocratic armed forces that our fighting men's demonstrations have underlined in the last few weeks. The fact is that seamen made an indispensable contribution to victory, whatever their personal motives may have been.

Under present laws, copied directly from British eighteenth-century codes, a merchant skipper is complete lord of his vessel. If a seaman commits an offense, the skipper is judge, jury and prosecutor and the man's only redress is a civil suit when his ship returns. These arbitrary powers, dead ashore since the Revolution, were bolstered by the military during the war. Any reader of the *Pilot* must have come across unbelievable incidents in which they were used to break men.

I believe we can act on a situation correctly only if we appraise it correctly. In the past, there has been a tendency to see the merchant marine as what it should be rather than what it is.

Finally, I would like to suggest some reading: (1) For a self-portrait of the Southern fascist who founded our merchant marine academy for training cadet officers—*An Admiral from Texas*, by Henry A. Wiley, USN. (2) For the code of anti-democracy designed to convert free Americans into brutalized mercenaries—*Customs and Traditions of the US Navy*, by Comdr. Leland P. Lovette, USN.

SAMUEL SCHIFFER.

In Defense of Soyer

TO NEW MASSES: In the January 15 issue of NM Betty Smith criticizes Moses Soyer's comments on Kaethe Kollwitz. She particularly singles out a sentence in which she claims to find him guilty of discrimination against women. I have known Moses for many years and consider it a privilege to have been one of his art students and to number myself among his good friends. To accuse him of "male chauvinism" is totally unjust. I quote the following sentence to which Betty Smith takes such exception: "It is strong vigorous work and only in the compassionate tenderness of her many 'mother and child' versions could the uninitiated divine the hand of a woman." Its meaning is to emphasize that Kaethe Kollwitz in her lithograph versions of "mother and child" was able to express all the compassion and tenderness that is inherent in the feeling of a mother for her child *because* she was a woman, with a woman's understanding. I do think that women should have their rightful place in the sun but that there should be less sensitivity about a woman's hand being discernible in her work. It is deplorable only when it becomes a means for women to exploit their femininity, as in the case of the artist Marie Laurencin, who used it in a sense both bourgeois and superficial. I also do not believe that the women Betty Smith refers to: Madam Curie, Wanda Wasilewska, Mother Bloor, etc., were very much preoccupied with the fact of their womanhood—conscious of it, yes, but their first concern was wholly with their work. They were great because of their selflessness, dedication and individual abilities. But isn't that true of both men and women of unique achievement?

I would like to congratulate NM on its excellent art column, especially on the new policy in which artists write about artists; I find it most intelligent and stimulating.

NATALIE BUDD.

New York.

TO NEW MASSES: As an old fellow student and admirer of Moses Soyer, both as an artist and art critic, I must come to his defense. What seems to burn up Betty Smith is the phrase "compassionate tenderness in the mother and child pictures of Kaethe Kollwitz." Soyer, I am sure, does not refer to this quality in the work of Kaethe Kollwitz as being in any way inferior. This quality of "compassionate tenderness" is found in the work of the greatest male as well as female artists. I think Miss Smith owes Moses Soyer an apology.

The idea of having various painters act as art critics is an inspiration for which Moses Soyer deserves credit. This puts the art review section of NM on a very high level. These reviews, being the critical appraisal of so many fine painters, will give us a better understanding of what to look for in an exhibition. The reviews are usually compact, carefully analyzed and minus the flowery language of the average art critic, who tells you nothing in a very beautiful manner.

Greetings to Moses Soyer and keep up the good work.

M. RYSHPAN.

Montreal.

Negroes in Cuba

TO NEW MASSES: I must disagree with our Cuban friend Menendez on Cuba being such a paradise for the Negro. Did he ever try to get accommodations in a Havana hotel? Not even the second-rate ones would accommodate them when I was there three or four years ago. The owner of the hotel at which I was staying boasted to me that no Negro would ever get inside his hotel. When I was in Trinidad, a city cut off from the rest of Cuba by its mountains, a Cuban (Negro) artist would not be admitted in the only hotel in that town.

If you doubt me send for a copy of a Sunday *Hoy* in which a Negro comedian is interviewed. Read his bitter complaint on being discriminated against by the Cuban theaters, in which he could not get billings because he was a Negro. The radio was the only place he could get work. We must remember always that there are just two countries in the world where there is no Negro discrimination: the USSR and Brazil.

M. O.

New York.

Counteracting the KKK

TO NEW MASSES: For some time now I have been following the articles in NM with great interest, especially since I joined the Labor-Progressive Party while in the Canadian Army. Your recent article on the KKK especially impressed me as the type of article this country needs more of. At least something must be done to arouse more popular sentiment against these American fascists.

A good example is the recent picketing of Gerald L. K. Smith around the San Diego and Los Angeles area. Not to mention the refusal of the schools to allow Smith to speak here. If guys like Smith can spread so much of this hatred, I guess we ought to be able to spread some kind of propaganda to help counteract it, although it is a harder job.

TRUETT C. LUSK, JR.

Imperial Beach, Calif.

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Correction: Mr. Michael Carver writes that "the form will determine the content" in his letter of January 8 should read instead "the content will determine the form."

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REVIEW and COMMENT

LORD RUSSELL AND HISTORY

Comments on His "A History of Western Philosophy," by A. D. Winspear

THAT the history of ideas is susceptible of scientific treatment is a notion that begins to penetrate even the cloistered halls of universities. In his latest monumental volume Earl Russell, the distinguished British philosopher, attempts a history of Western philosophy from a scientific point of view.[1]

Lord Russell has gained for himself the reputation of a liberal. In the First World War he went to prison as a pacifist. His views on the estate of holy matrimony are unorthodox and to most people odd. The impression of liberalism in Russell is buttressed by his tendency to be ironical about clergymen. And be it said at the outset that Russell's volume is a tremendous advance over any previous history of Western philosophy since Hegel. He makes a deliberate attempt to relate movements of thought to movements of society. And at moments he is irritatingly close to an accurate analysis. He sees in general terms the reactionary role of Socrates and Plato, though without incisive analysis.[2] He is clear on the role of Pythagoras. He sees that Stoicism appealed to rulers. In dealing with economic movements in the Middle Ages he is frequently acute. Russell is at his best when he deals with philosophical liberalism. The chapter on Leibnitz is excellent. The whole work is an implicit tribute to the strength of the intellectual and social movements that flow from Karl Marx. As Isidor Schneider recently remarked, all writers in recent times with pretensions to science are forced to make a genuflection in the direction of the connection of ideas with "Political and Social Circumstances." Nonetheless, one is forced to the conclusion that as an attempt at a scientific history of Western thought, Russell's book is a monumental failure.

In order to establish this contention, perhaps it would be well to ask what are the requirements for a scientific history of ideas. I fancy that most readers of NM would agree on the following criteria: (1) that the historian should have a detailed, exact appreciation of the mode of production at each stage of social evolution; (2) that he should appreciate fully the factors and forces at work building and destroying every social structure and every political equilibrium; (3) that he should have thought out fully and adequately the various factors—material, economic, social, political and ideological—that go into the creation of a philosophy; (4) that in particular he should be fully aware of the role of class interest and in pre-class society incipient exploitation in the creation of ideology. If we apply these canons to Russell's book, I am afraid that one can only report that on all counts Russell flunks badly.

1. He shows no awareness of the different modes of production in primitive hunting communities, in pre-state agricultural societies, in slave-owning classical society, in feudal society, in mercantile, industrial and finance capital. As a consequence, he is forced to play with the counters of idealistic abstraction. A king is a king; a priest is a priest whatever the social relations under which he operates. A Hammurabi would equal a Charlemagne or a Friedrich I or a George VI. A state is a state, an empire is an empire. Egypt = Alexandria = Rome = the Holy Roman Empire (at all stages) = Britain = Hitler's Germany = postwar America. . . . Examine then this absurdity (p. 260), "The heroic queen Boudicea . . . was heading a rebellion against capitalism [!] as represented by the philosophical apostle of austerity [i.e., Seneca]." Or (p. 485) "John Ball, the Socialist unfrocked priest." [!] Examine this formulation (p. 5): "Whereas religion was bound up with the government of an empire, political motives did much to transform its political features. A god or goddess became associated with the state, and had to give, not only an abundant harvest, but victory in war. A rich priestly caste elaborated the ritual and the theology and fitted together into a pantheon the several divinities of the component parts of the empire." To bring precision and depth to such a loose collection of generalizations one would have to dwell at length on the specific characteristics of pre-Greek Oriental society. One would need to examine the social structure, the peculiar method of agricultural production, the function of slaves in building cult objects, the common ownership of land, the role of the directing bureaucracy, the need to organize social control of the water supply; of all these specific questions of social and economic organization Russell shows himself singularly unaware.

2. He is consequently blind to the forces and factors which destroy every social equilibrium. When dealing with pre-Greek society—the Minoan-Mycenaean, for example—he simply describes the findings of archaeology and proclaims it as science. Economic factors, social, political, ideal factors are simply catalogued and arranged paratactically. Russell's weaknesses of method become painfully obvious in his dealing with every great period of social transition. The transition to classical society he does not understand at all. Nor the change from classical society to feudalism. Nor the break-up of feudalism, which characteristically he regards as the "disintegration of the Catholic synthesis." The causes he lists as follows: (a) the loss of Constantinople to the Papacy, 1261; (b) the rise of national monarchies in France and England; (c) the rise of a rich commercial class; (d) increase of knowledge in the laity; (e) spirit of independence in the cities; (f) democratic and nationalistic tendencies; (g) loss by the papacy of moral authority. This is what I mean by a paratactical arrangement of causes. The essential dynamic of social (and therefore intellectual) change is simply not thought through. (One suspects that Russell is too much infected with a Human skepticism about causation in general. "The balance, therefore," he writes "is in favor of Hume's view that

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[1] A HISTORY OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY, and its Connection with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day, *by Bertrand Russell. Simon & Schuster, $3.95.*

[2] He calls one chapter on Plato "The Sources of Plato's Opinions." The present reviewer's *Genesis of Plato's Thought* is not mentioned in his index.

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there is nothing in *cause* except invariable succession.")

3. Has he thought out fully and adequately the various factors—material, social, political and ideological—that go into the creation of a philosophy? Again I am afraid Russell flunks. "Christianity had an advantage over the worship of the Great Mother because Christian baptism was cheap, the *Taurobolium* (the sacrifice of a bull) expensive"! (In general his appreciation of such phenomena as the Mystery Religions and Gnosticism is slight in the extreme.) "Secular rulers were not ready to throw in their lot with the heretics—no existing heresy could reconcile heresy with the claims of kings to dominion." (The causal sequence is made vague by the connective clause, "this was largely because.")

"By self-interest Man has become gregarious, but in instinct he has remained to a great extent solitary; hence the need of religion and morality to reinforce self-interest." (!) Russell could never have perpetrated this howler if he had ever studied the mode of production in primitive society.

4. To what degree is he aware of class interests in a class-divided society or incipient exploitation in a pre-class society as the determinants of ideology?

Here we are forced to the conclusion that Russell can only conduct a flippant and cynical flirtation with any such scientific point of view; consider for example his formulation: "Plato is concerned only with the guardians, who are to be a class apart, like the Jesuits in old Paraguay, the ecclesiastics in the States of the Church until 1870, and the Communist Party in the USSR at the present day." It is clear that Russell has not adequately defined for himself the concept of a class. Or "The warrior, the gentleman, the plutocrat and the dictator, each has his own standard of the good and the true." If philosophy is a class science, just what is a class anyway? For this rigorous analysis Russell substitutes cynicism. The argument of Leibnitz (all's for the best in the best of all possible worlds) "apparently satisfied the queen of Prussia. Her serfs continued to enjoy the evil while she continued to enjoy the good, and it was comforting to be assured by a great philosopher that this was just and right."

THIS leads us to the more fundamental weaknesses in Russell as a scientist—his basic idealism, his false concept of science, his neglect and misunderstanding of dialectic.

First his idealism. I said a moment ago that Russell appreciates vaguely the class position of Plato but without any incisiveness of analysis. He recognizes Plato as aristocrat, he sees the function of mathematics for the Platonic scheme, he rejects the crude Platonic conceptual idealism. But he cannot escape from idealism as social causation. In my review copy of Russell's enormous tome I have marked ninety-six examples of crude idealism when he thinks of social change. A handful of examples must suffice. "Culture is to be devoted to making men *gentlemen*, in the sense which largely owing to Plato is familiar in England." "Both [Mohammedans and Byzantines] stimulated the West when it emerged from barbarism—the Mohammedans chiefly in the thirteenth century, the Byzantines in the fifteenth. In each case the stimulus produced new thought better than any produced by the transmitters—in the one case scholasticism, in the other the Renaissance (which however had other causes also)." (!) "The cause of this wide diffusion of heresy was partly disappointment at the failure of the Crusades, but mainly moral disgust at the wealth and wickedness of the clergy." We need hardly say that economic and social movements lay behind these thirteenth-century heresies. "The problem of a durable and satisfactory social order can only be solved by combining the solidity of the Roman Empire with the idealism of Saint Augustine's City of God. To achieve this a new philosophy will be needed." "The Reformation and Counter-Reformation, alike, represent the rebellion of less civilized nations against the intellectual domination of Italy." "The growth of unreason throughout the nineteenth century and what has passed of the twentieth is a natural sequel to Hume's destruction of empiricism." Nothing of course to do with the decay of capitalism!

Now in the light of these points let us consider this extraordinary paradigm:

YAHWEH = DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM
THE MESSIAH = MARX
THE ELECT = THE PROLETARIAT
THE CHURCH = THE COMMUNIST PARTY
THE SECOND COMING = THE REVOLUTION
HELL = PUNISHMENT OF THE CAPITALISTS
THE MILLENNIUM = THE COMMUNIST COMMONWEALTH

This comes at the end of a discussion of the outlook of Saint Augustine. Russell is apparently unable to make clear to his own mind the difference between the world despair of an aristocratic writer in a period of universal decay and modern progressive movements which aim to release machine production from the shackles of private ownership. Let us consider this point a little further. In the years of the decay

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Study for a Mozart Portrait, by Joseph Solman.

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ot the Roman Empire both Augustine within the Christian Church and Plotinus among the pagan philosophers developed a philosophy of abject pessimism and despair. St. Augustine could see no good in human nature. Humanity of itself without the grace of God could accomplish nothing. Plotinus equally despaired of the power of human reason to comprehend the real world and took refuge in intuition and ecstasy. Augustine was particularly sharp in his criticism of the British monk Pelagius who held that human nature was not irrevocably and hopelessly corrupt. I remember an elderly clergyman at Oxford once shaking his head and exclaiming, "the British working class is incurably Pelagian." The old priest was much wiser than the eminent philosopher. And this paradigm is an almost classic example of the three major weaknesses of Russell's thinking that we have already discussed.

Russell's conception of science comes out most clearly in his criticism of Marx. "He (i.e., Marx) is too practical, too much wrapped up in the problems of his time. His purview is confined to this planet, and within this planet to man." (One wonders if Russell can have read *Anti-Duehring* or the *Dialectics of Nature*.) "Since Copernicus, it has been evident that Man has not the cosmic importance which he formerly arrogated to himself. No man who has failed to assimilate this fact has a right to call his philosophy scientific. There goes with this limitation to terrestrial affairs a readiness to believe in progress as a universal law." For the concept of prediction and control of events both social and natural Russell substitutes an aloof contemplation of things "above the heaven and below the earth." In the mood of a Lucretius he mounts the "lofty tower well-fortified with the wisdom of the wise." Any plans for the progressive amelioration of the lot of man from the summit of his high detachment he dismisses as "power politics." Strangely enough John Dewey and his school fall within the orbit of this Olympian detachment. This accounts for the anguished yelps from Columbia University and Washington Square. And yet, as readers of NM will recall, by a most ingenious paradox Russell recently supported the power politics *a l'outrance* of our time—Anglo-American control of the secrets of the atom bomb. There is an adumbration of this development when he argues, "There can be no true independence except for a state or alliance strong enough, by its own efforts, to repel all attempts at foreign conquest. Nothing smaller than America and the British Empire combined will satisfy this requirement; and perhaps even this would be too a small unit." It is a strange and melancholy spectacle—this cloud walker in the realm of idealistic abstractions, this stalwart opponent of all progress and reform as "unscientific" and "power politics," stepping out of the ivory tower just long enough to throw his weight and power behind all that is predatory and reactionary in our times.

It certainly cannot be explained by any such facile formula as that Russell is a "British aristocrat."

THE most basic reason for Russell's failure to achieve a genuinely scientific outlook is, I think, his failure to comprehend dialectics. His account of Hegel's logic is quite comically inadequate. "This illustration might also be used to illustrate the dialectic, which consists of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. First we say: 'Reality is an uncle.' This is the Thesis. But the existence of an uncle implies that of a nephew. Since nothing really exists except the Absolute, and we are now committed to the existence of a nephew, we must conclude: 'The Absolute is a nephew.' This is the Antithesis. But there is the same objection to this as to the view that the Absolute is an uncle; therefore we are driven to the view that the Absolute is the whole composed of uncle and nephew. This is the Synthesis. But this synthesis is still unsatisfactory, because a man can be an uncle only if he has a brother or sister who is a parent of the nephew. Hence we are driven to enlarge our universe to include the brother or sister, with his wife or her husband. In this sort of way, so it is contended, we can be driven on, by the mere force of logic, from any suggested predicate of the Absolute to the final conclusion of the dialectic, which is called the 'Absolute Idea.' Throughout the whole process, there is an underlying assumption that nothing can be really true unless it is about Reality as a whole."

The failure to appreciate dialectics, which is the science of the emergence of the new, causes Russell to waver uneasily between mechanism and idealism. He admires "mechanistic science," but as I have pointed out above, he thinks idealistically. He is still impaled on the age-old dilemma which has dogged philosophy since Anaxagoras abandoned the dialectic of Heraclitus. The mechanist in his passion for continuity cannot explain real change, the emergence of the really new. For him what emerges is simply a reshuffling of elements already there. Constantly therefore, he levels down: Man is a complicated animal; an animal is a complicated machine, etc., etc. The vitalist, on the other hand, seeing that change is real, cannot see how it can be explained by a mere reshuffling of the elements. For him therefore, the emergence of the new is mysterious and miraculous. The mechanist is devoted to continuity and to that degree he is nearer to a scientific outlook, and the vitalist sees discontinuity in change and this discontinuity is for him completely inexplicable. Russell cannot solve this dilemma, and the spectacle of his gyrations only confirms for me the argument of "The idea of a people's university" (the inaugural address of the Abraham Lincoln School) that only the spokesman of the progressive people—the working class—can achieve a science of social change.

I might make one or two other specific criticisms from the field of my special interest. To say that Plato believed that "reality is eternal and timeless, and that, on logical grounds, all change must be illusory" is true of the early Plato. It is not true of the Plato of the later dialogues. Russell has apparently not read the book of a fellow Cantabrigian, Skemp, "The problem of motion in the later Platonic dialogues." (He could be pardoned for not having read my review in *Classical Weekly* in which I try to *explain* this change of outlook by relating it to the collapse of Sparta at the battle of Leuctra (371 B.C.) and suggesting an analogy with Col. Lindbergh's very Christian "Wave of the Future.") A recent article by Prof. Hans Kelsen ("The Philosophy of Aristotle and the Hellenic-Macedonian Policy," *Ethics*, October 1937) would have saved Russell from the absurd assertion that "Aristotle . . . (was) blandly oblivious of the fact that the era of City States had given way to the era of Empires." It might have led him to reflect on the cause of the dualism within Aristotle's thought. It would equally have saved him from the vapid wisecrack, "There are two Aristotles, one when he is thinking and one when he is arguing against Plato."

The book is studded with misprints which will delight, perplex or enchant the alert reader. William James is called an eminent "phycologist." This is pleasant. But one deserves to become classic: "I do not care to dogatize." Hear, then, the end of the whole matter—the eminent, the learned, the noble philosopher does not care to dogatize.

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Apologia Pro Kipling

RUDYARD KIPLING, *by Hilton Brown. Harper. $3.*

IT MAY be that a Kipling revival is under way. Of course two books separated by three or four years would not of themselves constitute a literary movement, did not both the first, by T. S. Eliot, and the present study, by Hilton Brown, take the tone of an argument by defense counsel before some mythical literary Supreme Court.

The Eliot book, which consisted of a selection from Kipling's "verse" with a lengthy critical preface, surprised the literary world. Kipling is quite different from the seventeenth-century poets about whom Eliot has had so much of value to say. But this surprise did not prevent many from swallowing Eliot's thesis whole, hair-splitting and hypocritical as it was. Eliot made no effort to hide the fact that it was Kipling's Toryism that had attracted him. The hypocrisy lay in the fact that Eliot, upholding both his and Kipling's Toryism, had tried at the same time to absolve it from complicity in the full-scale offensive which fascism, aided by Toryism, was then carrying out against democracy.

"To many people," Eliot wrote, "a critical attitude towards democracy has come to imply a friendly feeling towards fascism—which from a truly Tory point of view, is merely the extreme degradation of democracy." This association of fascism with democracy cannot be considered an honest mistake, an innocent swallowing of the fascist "folk" propaganda. The Tory-abetted sell-out of democracy in Spain and Czechoslovakia was then living history, and the material now being raked over at the Nuremberg trials was even then available to anyone with the honesty and courage to face it. And notice the medieval cunning of the word "critical." A democratic system can profit from criticism. The honest word, in the light of Eliot's Tory writings, would be "condemnatory," which leads straight to the fascist orbit. And there is the hair-splitting of the phrase "truly Tory," which Eliot elaborates upon. "He [Kipling] can only be called a Tory in a sense in which only a handful of writers together with a number of mostly inarticulate and uninfluential people are ever Tories in one generation." The only explanation of this which makes sense is that the "true Tory" is the one who holds and propagates the ideas of contempt for people in the field of literature and philosophy, and who is harmless because nobody pays much attention to him. He cannot be a fascist, for hating all people, he hates fascists too. Yet can one who holds such ideas deny the link to those who carry out their implication in terms of oppression and bloodshed, or if he is honest, not undertake a reevaluation when the bloodshed is on?

Compared to Eliot's offensive in behalf of Kipling and Toryism, this book by Hilton Brown is much more apologetic. It is part a psychological study of Kipling's life, part an analysis of his writings. And so thoroughly does the author present an unwitting case against Kipling that the book has real value, marred mainly by the flimsy nature of the case he builds up for the writer. Kipling's work is not of no value, but the qualities he does have are other than those which either Brown or Eliot look for.

Apology is, in fact, the tone of the book. As to India, "Kipling was a boy in India, and his India was a boy's India." As to his Toryism, "He must not be too heavily blamed; the attack of upper-class England is an insidious one, and has brought down many more naturally endowed to resist it than was this respectful apostle of the Law." As to his imperialism, he tried "to make all the men of the sister nations within the Empire interested in one another . . . Was this imperialism? If so, what was wrong with it?" Almost a chapter is taken up with a defense against the charge that Kipling had Indian blood. There are detailed, painstaking explanations of Kipling's mind in terms of his Presbyterian background, his unhappy school days, his father's reactionary ideas, the weakness of democratic movements at the time in India. And coming to Kipling's poetry, Brown repeats the silly Eliot apology that if it is insensitive poetry, after all it was not meant to be poetry. It is "verse," and very great "verse."

What is the Kipling problem?

At a time when fine English writing was generally aiming at a studio preciousness and old-master polish, Kipling came with a style that had the quality of rising directly from life and bearing the stamp of the people. It was close to a folk style, rich in the vivid detail of good journalism, moving with the varied cadences of actual speech, saturated with a folk-like richness of imagery taken from a real environment mostly new to literature. The characters in his stories and poetry were largely the common people—the masses of India, the British foot-soldier, the fishermen of *Captains*

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Courageous. In the *Jungle Books* there was a happy grafting of an Indian folk speech on the tongues of animals. His forms were popular ones; the story involving plot and action, the poem suggesting song.

But these qualities were crippled by the reactionary nature of Kipling's ideas. Having little connection with the real relationships between people, these ideas are responsible for the weakness of his larger forms, and for the lack of conviction in many of his short stories. And they are responsible for the weakness of his poetry. It is not the fact that he wrote "verse" which makes so much of his poetry uninteresting today. Shakespeare wrote great songs, Burns and Shelley wrote politically in such rhymed and rhythmic forms. The fault is that Kipling's poems suffer from frequent insensitivity to the reality which they touch upon, from a more than frequent immaturity of thought. These are standards by which we would test any poetry, whether in Kipling's popular forms or Eliot's intellectually subtlized ones.

Thus Kipling's attraction and bid for greatness lie precisely in those qualities of nearness to people which Eliot and Brown refuse to recognize except as some mystic "power" which came out of nowhere. The weakness which has caused so much of his work to fall out of circulation is his failure to carry out in ideas, in search for truth, the implications of his material and forms. And to say, as Brown does, that we can forget his ideas and enjoy his writing, is unrealistic today, when democracy and the freedom of the colonial peoples are crucial issues for the survival of humanity. Kipling's picture of India, for example, is that the only "good" Indians are those who are loyal servants of the white "sahibs," as in *Without Benefit of Clergy*, or spies for the English and traitors to their own people, as in *Kim*. There is reality in Kipling's work: his discovery, for example, as Tolstoy and Zola discovered, that armies are made and battles are won by the common soldier, who is a human being rather than a pawn on a chessboard. He never asked, however, why the battles were fought, as the others did and as all of humanity is asking today. One who reads Kipling today should be fully conscious of the questions he did not ask, and of how their absence distorts his work and spreads thin his fund of honestly-felt experience. There is such experience in his work, but it is a pity that in a writer of Kipling's productivity and genius the amount is so small.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

The USSR Abroad

USSR FOREIGN POLICY, *by Victor A. Yakhontoff. Coward-McCann. $3.50.*

MR. YAKHONTOFF'S book starts with a sound assumption. Like everything else about the Soviet Union, rumor and abysmal prejudice overshadow the truth about her foreign policy. Mr. Yakhontoff has, therefore, taken it upon himself to recapitulate the facts, to give them an inner wholeness and an outer design. I do not mean that he has fabricated a structure to suit his particular view of the Soviet's conduct of foreign affairs. He has merely let the record speak vigorously for itself and what we have finally is an able review of Soviet international relations from 1917 to the early post-Teheran period.

Mr. Yakhontoff relates, in some detail, Soviet resistance to armed intervention. This initial struggle for survival has left a deep impress on the Soviet mind. It is a heritage with many ramifications and the more perceptive reader will regret that Mr. Yakhontoff has not explored them sufficiently. From these early beginnings can be gleaned the reasons for Soviet centralization of its foreign policy and its decentralization many years later. From them also can be seen the basis of Soviet caution in establishing proper relations with other powers—a caution made necessary by a world hostile to the consolidation of the Soviet state. Throughout the period of consolidation and its undeniable achievement the Soviets pursued, as they always will, a flexible policy with the fixed purpose of maintaining peace by preventing a union of antagonistic forces against them. But that has been one side of the coin; for on the other side there are the strong positive steps; first, to keep from becoming isolated, secondly and predominantly, to arrange a collective security against potential and actual aggressors.

It is in this tacit frame of reference that Mr. Yakhontoff describes the development of Soviet foreign affairs. He outlines the moves made for ever broader collaboration with other states—the failures as well as the successes. Particularly well done is his exposition of Moscow's relations with Geneva. And by far the best sections of the book are his reviews of the role played by the USSR in Spain and China. The use of documents and speeches wherever possible by Litvinov, Molotov, Stalin and others adds drama to the text and the reader has at first hand the words that have made history instead of someone else's paraphrasing of them. In fact the use of such documents enables the reader to make judgments on his own. No one, unless his mind is absolutely impervious to reason, can read any of Litvinov's speeches at League of Nations meetings without sensing that his was the voice of a people profoundly devoted to peace and freedom.

I wish that Mr. Yakhontoff had undertaken some analysis of why Soviet foreign policy in its fundamentals is what it is. There is always the tendency to divorce the external from the internal—Soviet foreign policy from socialism. Some years ago the former Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain, Ivan Maisky, in part defined Soviet policy abroad as socialism projected into the international sphere. That is a succinct summary of the case and helps to unravel otherwise seeming mysteries. There are no coupon-clippers in the USSR, no Fairless' or DuPonts, and their absence makes for a policy totally devoid of aggrandizement and aggression. With the kind of institutionalist method Mr. Yakhontoff has used in his book a good deal of value emerges, but you never quite get at the core of things. It is very much like describing the human circulatory system without describing the functioning of the heart muscle.

JOHN STUART.

To End Bigotry

THIS WAY TO UNITY, *edited by Arnold Herrick and Herbert Askwith. Oxford Book Co. $2.*

FROM the decay of capitalist economy arise such aromas as cynicism, mysticism, sadism, racism—i.e., fascism.

The book under review helps create a breeze to make breathing less difficult, but on the whole it does little to bury the corpse. It is an anthology of brief extracts on the subject of bigotry from the works of about seventy individuals, plus a well-organized section on "questions and projects," with the predominant tone that of a liberal exhortation for sweetness and light. A few of the pieces, notably those by Lincoln, Garrison, Carey McWilliams, Bucklin Moon, Albert Halper, Irving Brant and Langston Hughes, speak in terms of material and historical conditions, of struggle and of organized action for basic change. It is noteworthy, however, that not a single living leader of a secular mass movement is included in the roll of authors, and the only mention of a key weapon against intolerance —rank and file trade unionism—is contained in some parenthetic com-

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ments taken from the *Reader's Digest*.

Nevertheless, the volume should serve as an aid to progressive teachers or group-study leaders, for it is an improvement over the usual material offered to high school and college level students in such courses as English and contemporary civilization.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Early Americana

ALBUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY 1783-1853, *by James Truslow Adams. Scribners. $7.50.*

THIS album assembles 1,300 sketches, drawings, portraits, cartoons, reproductions and photographs depicting aspects of early American life, arranged chronologically. By a considerable stretch of imagination, aided with a specially written running commentary, it may be called a child's history of United States. In a sense it is a visual history of graphic arts showing their development and evolution over a period of seventy years, although that is not the purpose of the book. It is by no means a visual history of America. Any such effort is restricted by the inherent limitations and absence of historical purpose in the hundreds of early artists drawn upon. The meager written commentary does not even make an effort to supply the background or meaning beyond the obvious content of the illustrations. Much more could have been done even with the limited material at the disposal of the editors—but James T. Adams is not noted for penetrating insight or grasp of social forces in American history. His conservative slant is evident even in the selections of the illustrations. For example he selects a reproduction of Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*, a criticism of the Bible, rather than his much more widely circulated *Rights of Man*, which contains a passionate defense of the French Revolution and democracy, and had a profound influence on the popular movement for Jeffersonian democracy in the last decade of the eighteenth century. RALPH BOWMAN.

Brief Review

I'VE HAD IT, *by Col. Beirne Lay, Jr. Harper. $2.*

COLONEL LAY has written a smooth, thrilling account of his crash in a US bomber into occupied France and the months of hairbreadth escapes from the Nazis. The colonel is a facile storyteller, but he has little sense of the truly dramatic and he persists in sticking to the surface of things. Underground heroes, Maquis, and courageous French peasants move—and die—in these pages without revealing any of their thoughts, hopes or aspirations. Even his own ideas —and those of his companion—seem unimportant to Lay. He gives a good account of bunions and thirst, but none of fear and dreams. P. DE P.

Worth Noting

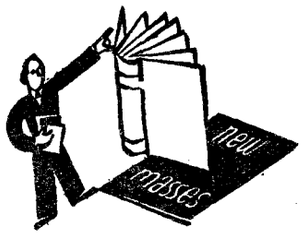
UNDER the auspices of *The Protestant* a concert called "Salute To Humanity" is being given by the famous Negro conductor Dean Dixon and his American Youth Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in New York on Sunday Evening, February 10. The program will include American premieres of Soviet compositions, the world premiere of Sam Morgenstern's symphonic poem "The Warsaw Ghetto," and the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, with Vivian Rivkin as soloist.

To Louis Adamic

(*Continued from page* 18)

Protestant, Anglo-Saxon country. So successfully has this notion been propagated and defended that "minority groups" have been compelled, and are still compelled, to give outward compliance to the tenets of the Anglo-Saxon heritage. Despite our ethnic, cultural and racial diversity as a people, we still have a majority-prescribed and dominated culture.

I would also like to point out that your title is slightly misleading. Only in the sense of the diverse origins of its people can America be called "a nation of nations." The memorable passage that you quote from Crevecoeur (p. 82) provides the classic answer to the question "What, then, is the American, this new man? He is neither a European nor the descendant of a European; hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country." I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now "four wives of different nations. *He* is an American who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new modes of life he has embraced, the new government which he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. . . ." CAREY MCWILLIAMS.



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FILMS OF THE WEEK

THE infantry platoon of *Walk In the Sun* (Victoria) fares much better in the hands of screen writer Robert Rossen and director Lewis Milestone than it did in the original Harry Brown novel. Its scuffling, six-mile inland march from Salerno has the feeling of authentic battle anxiety and fear: "You never see anybody. You fight this war by ear." The defects of the film, aside from some over self-conscious touches by Milestone, are largely the defects of the book. The GI's are cast in theatrical mold, in rigid patterns that determine their talk and their constant effort to realize themselves as types. Moreover, they talk too much. In this respect *GI Joe,* with which this film has been favorably compared, is far superior.

After *Walk in the Sun* gets beyond the opening landing barge scenes (incidentally the worst in the film), its positive qualities begin to emerge. By scaling the battle down to human dimensions, the film enables you to understand the soldier in action. For the individual GI the battle is the hill ahead, the waiting enemy, and his anxiety to avoid personal disaster. The film gives the slow and wary six-mile walk all the excitement of charging cavalry, because you have come to know and feel for each man. This is due to the skillful direction, to the honest and earnest air of the actors as people, as distinct from types.

In the soldier's reactions is an umbilical relation to the life they left behind. At such times the qualities of hope or fear or self-reliance push aside the confining dimensions of predetermined character. It is as though the writer and director then yield to the spontaneity of the moment, producing honest and living drama. The best of such scenes occurs when the platoon encounters two Italian soldiers. The GI interpreter becomes so engrossed in quizzing them that he impatiently brushes off his sergeant in Italian; but the same qualities are present in other scenes.

What stands out in the film is Milestone's imaginative direction of the camera. When the men attack the armored car, he focuses in closeup on the running legs and on the grenade-throwing arms, recreating the suspense and importance of the incident that the attackers feel. His cameras aim over the shoulders of the Nazi defenders as well as from behind the platoon, providing an extra dimension to the engagement. Trained on the road, the boulders, the bushes, they make vivid the danger that the countryside holds for the moving men.

The recording of the changes in the light, from the pre-dawn murk when the boys disembark to the full sunlight in which they move up the road, is a technical masterpiece. At times, however, this self-conscious use of the camera becomes excessive, as when a cigarette or a hand reaching for a cigarette is shown in close-up against the sky. Milestone obviously intended to stress the importance of the cigarette to the GI, but here the result is artiness.

A brilliant piece of acting is turned in by Buddy Yarus, who used to entertain NEW MASSES readers as a member of the Flatbush Art Theater. Yarus, or George Tyne, as he now calls himself, has been growing steadily from bit parts to major roles. He added much authenticity to *Objective Burma* as the soldier from Brooklyn, and in this film he supports Dana Andrews and Richard Conte admirably. Much of the film's feeling of candor and honesty is due to the work of these three.

"CORNERED" (Palace) is produced by the same personnel, more or less, that made *Murder, My Sweet*: Edward Dmytryk, director; Adrian Scott, producer. And William Powell, lead actor. John Wexley instead of John Paxton is the writer. Here is a combination of movie talents that should produce first-rate stuff. *Cornered,* however, is high-powered nonsense—a perfect example of Hollywood's waste of ability. Dmytryk contributes skillful and imaginative direction, Wexley a well-constructed story and Scott nice cooperation.

But the end product is comparable to a beautiful cabinet made to contain garbage. In dealing with material of little importance, Dmytryk is beginning to evidence a certain petrification of technique. Without the stimulus of fresh problems and material, such a process is inevitable. Thus is talent permitted to deteriorate. In the meantime, the use of talented men gives trivial films a gloss of importance that is highly deceptive. Were *Cornered* done in the usual hack style, it would be instantly dismissed for the "B" film that it really is.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

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Music

THE frightful wastefulness in American musical life was brought home to me forcefully last week when I attended two song recitals at Town Hall the combined audiences of which would scarcely have filled one-third of that auditorium. And this was not due to the quality of the performers.

Miss Ruth Kisch-Arndt's recital of older music, with the assistance of the American Society of Ancient Instruments, was one of the most unusual events of this season, the kind of program which reviewers of our daily newspapers are constantly clamoring for. But, I surmise, the first-string critics were that evening attending the Philadelphia Orchestra's concert at which Rudolf Serkin was playing the Schumann concerto, certainly not a novelty in New York's concert halls. Consequently only a handful of people heard or were properly informed of a noteworthy singing of great music, most of it from the period before Bach. Miss Arndt ranges over the centuries with intelligence and catholicity of taste, and she sings with understanding and directness. There were extraordinary pieces by Heinrich Schuetz, the fourth century Prudentius hymn, the twelfth century Hebrew Eulogy on the death of Moses by Amr Ibn Sach'l (from the oldest known Hebrew manuscript extant), some Renaissance songs, and the superb music of Johann Frank, Buxtehude and Handel. The Society of Ancient Instruments gave expert assistance to the singer, and in its own right admirably performed, among other things, a Scarlatti concerto.

The Austrian contralto Marion Matthaeus, in her American debut at Town Hall, revealed a rich voice of great range and power, adequate for both opera and song—but revealed it, again, to only a few.

At the Plaza Hotel, however, Miss Maggie Teyte, singing at a benefit for American Relief for France, proved the large audience there is for good singing when it is adequately publicized. An overflow audience heard her in a varied program which included a new set of songs by Reynaldo Hahn, interesting but not too original.

HOWARD HANSON led the Philharmonic Orchestra in a program of American music in which, strangely enough, it was Charles T. Griffes' "The White Peacock" which stood out, though Walter Piston, Loeffler, William Bergsma and Mr. Hanson himself were represented. It was a heavy pro-

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gram, dismal in its sonorities, especially in Mr. Hanson's "Romantic" Symphony, and thoroughly lacking in grace and lightness. For the life of me I do not understand why the term "romantic" (once the watchword of experiment and progress) should now have become identified with banality. Certainly this is not typical of what contemporary American musicians are creating.

And while I am in a plaintive mood, let me ask: Why was the 250th anniversary of the death of England's greatest composer, Henry Purcell, who died in 1695, allowed to pass unnoticed in this musical city?

WHAT to hear in New York: New York City Symphony, City Center, Monday evenings . . . Saidenberg's Little Symphony, YMHA, February 3 . . . American Youth Orchestra, Carnegie Hall, February 10 (first performance of Morgenstern's "The Warsaw Ghetto") . . . The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Carnegie Hall, February 18.

FREDERIC EWEN.

Records

THERE is much good singing on recently-released records. The second volume of Schubert's *Winterreise* (Columbia M-587, three ten-inch records) contains some of the loveliest songs of this series, such as *"Irrlicht," "Der Greise Kopf,"* and *"Der Leiermann."* Lottie Lehmann, still one of our great *lieder*-singers, achieves a sensitive balance between the lyrical and the dramatic. The new version of the *Alto Rhapsody* by Brahms (Victor SP-13, two twelve-inch records) preserves the richness, resonance and flexibility of Marian Anderson's wonderful voice; though in this recording, unfortunately, the latter has been allowed to overshadow the accompaniment provided by Pierre Monteux, the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, and the Municipal Chorus. Robert Shaw and the Victor Chorale give us the remarkable *Six Chansons* by Paul Hindemith, set to words by the poet Rilke (Victor 11-8868, one twelve-inch record). These are tender little pieces. I recommend this recording to Hindemith admirers, and only wish that Victor had supplied the printed words.

Italian opera is well represented in Jan Peerce's magnificent recordings of *"Parmi veder le lagrime"* from *Rigoletto*, and *"De' mei bollenti spiriti"* from *La Traviata* (Victor 11-8926, one twelve-inch record). With Zinka

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Milanov he sings the *"Miserere"* from *Il Trovatore*, and with Kerstin Thorborg *"Ai nostri monti"* (Victor 11-8782, one twelve-inch record). Both records are well worth getting. Zinka Milanov and Margaret Harshaw sing beautifully in "Mira o Norma" from Bellini's great opera (Victor 11-8924, one twelve-inch record). And finally, Leonard Warren reveals a rounded, vibrant baritone in the Toreador song from *Carmen* and Rossini's *"Largo ad factotum"* (Victor 11-8744, one twelve-inch record). Both Peerce and Warren have beautiful voices, but they should not be permitted to force them. F.E.

On Broadway

"THE MAGNIFICENT YANKEE," by Emmet Lavery, now at the Royale Theater, gives us a genteel glimpse into the home life of the late Justice Holmes. It is less a play than a series of scenes covering Holmes' stay in Washington from 1902 to the inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. All these take place in the library of Holmes' house. The chief figures involved—one can hardly call them characters—are Mrs. Holmes, Justice Brandeis, the crotchety, conservative Henry Adams, and the author Owen Wister.

Apart from one or two exchanges between Holmes and Brandeis, the spectator has little chance to savor the quality of Holmes' mind or the character of his liberalism. The problem of acquainting an audience with the issues Holmes faced in the course of his career was evidently a little too formidable for Mr. Lavery. Instead we have a domestic comedy, something of a cross between *Life with Father*, and *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*.

Perhaps the Chief Justice's charm was a bit old-fashioned, but Mr. Lavery could have avoided saddling him with lines like, "Woman, you're a beautiful and dangerous creature." There is also a particularly tasteless moment in which a chorus of eight male secretaries appears to sing "Happy Birthday" to the old gentleman. Even the strong love between Holmes and his wife is marred in the play with too much cuteness and daring references to Holmes' liking for Rabelais, naughty French novels and detective stories.

The acting of Dorothy Gish as Mrs. Holmes, Fleming Ward as Henry Adams, Sperling Oliver as Wister, and Edgar Barrier as Brandeis, is good, but Louis Calhern as Holmes is one of the brilliant performances of the season.

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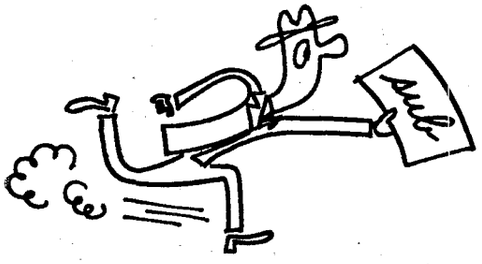

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